

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 033

MONDAY FEBRUARY 2, 2004

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

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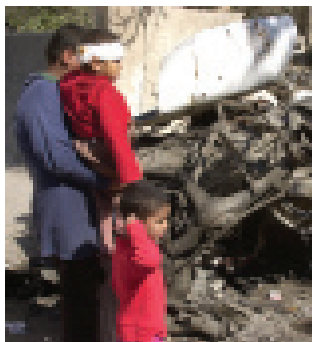
INSIDE



Cancelled Flights

Five U.S.-bound flights from Britain and France were canceled Saturday because of security concerns. The U.S. government said it had fresh indications of al-Qaida's continued interest in targeting commercial planes flying to the United States.

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US Fatalities

Three U.S. soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division were killed Saturday in a roadside bombing near the northern oil center of Kirkuk. Their deaths brought to 522 the number of American service members who have died since the Iraq war began March 20.

VIRTUE OF THE WEEK

Idealism

"Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind... Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth."

— Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 521

See Page 13

Land compensation funds out

CDA, MPLA to release initial money to landowners

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Some landowners will finally get their much-awaited compensation this week, possibly beginning today and tomorrow.

CDA board chairman Sixto Igisomar said that he and CDA executive director Mary Lou Ada had signed the request for the first drawdown of the bond money at Bank of Guam last Thursday.

"It should be available by next week," he said after Saturday's board meeting.

Igisomar declined to reveal the initial withdrawal, but sources said that it amounts to some \$5 million.

Igisomar said the initial release should have actually taken place last week but CDA officials were on an urgent trip to Palau.

He said the Marianas Public Lands Authority has already sent CDA a letter asking why its initial request was not acted upon.

"MPLA got frustrated because I was not in town to sign off the request, but that trip to Palau, which required our presence, had been scheduled," he said.

Igisomar and Ada, who were the only
See LAND on Page 8



EDITH ALEJANDRO

MISS TEEN ASPIRANTS

Miss Teen CNMI 2003 Remeylyn Julene Guerrero, with crown, poses with this year's Saipan candidates, who were presented to the public Saturday. They are, from left, Chanel Cabrera, Divana Dela Cruz, Christal Leon Guerrero, Jerbeth De Leon, and Jocelyn Castro. Candidates from Rota and Tinian will be presented at a later date. Story on Page 5.

Most ex-SU students are now factory workers

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Former Saipan University students ended up as contract workers, working mostly now in garment factories after the government issued them temporary work authorizations or TWAs.

Left to themselves, the former students are barely making both ends meet after they were asked to vacate an SU-

assigned housing late last month.

Wang Rui, who has served as spokesperson for the group, said he and a friend share a small room in Chalan Kanoa.

He said he could survive because he borrowed \$200 from a former classmate who has found work ahead of him.

Wang, a former electrical firm manager in China, said that he is still waiting for a prospective employer to

call him in. He said, though, that his potential work is not exactly related to his field.

Wang said that as far he knows, most of the 84 former SU students have found work on island. "Most of them are working in garment factory," said Wang.

Wang said they have decided to stay
See MOST on Page 8

CDA to NMC: Clarify position on Gateway funding

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Development Authority wants Northern Marianas College to be single-minded on which agency it actually wants to deal with for its funding needs for the Pacific Gateway Project.

NMC is currently speaking with at

least three local agencies—Marianas Public Lands Trust, NMI Retirement Fund, and the CDA—for interim financing for the project, while also seeking a direct loan with the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development.

"We want to know where they [NMC] are. If NMC wants MPLT or NMRF, go ahead. Don't negotiate with

more people because it's going to cost government assets. It would require evaluation and this means spending for the project," said CDA board chairman Sixto Igisomar.

He said CDA "is willing to be the last resort."

In a meeting Saturday, the CDA board instructed CDA to clarify its position on the project.

Dead dolphin found to have fed on seagrass

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Are dolphins on CNMI's waters starving?

An autopsy conducted on a dolphin showed that the creature had fed on seagrass.

ing that it may have had difficulty in catching fish for its prey.

Dolphins are fast-moving aquatic mammals, the jaws of which contain as many as 250 conical teeth. Their teeth are adapted for ripping and tearing prey, not for chewing.

The Department of Lands and
See DEAD on Page 8



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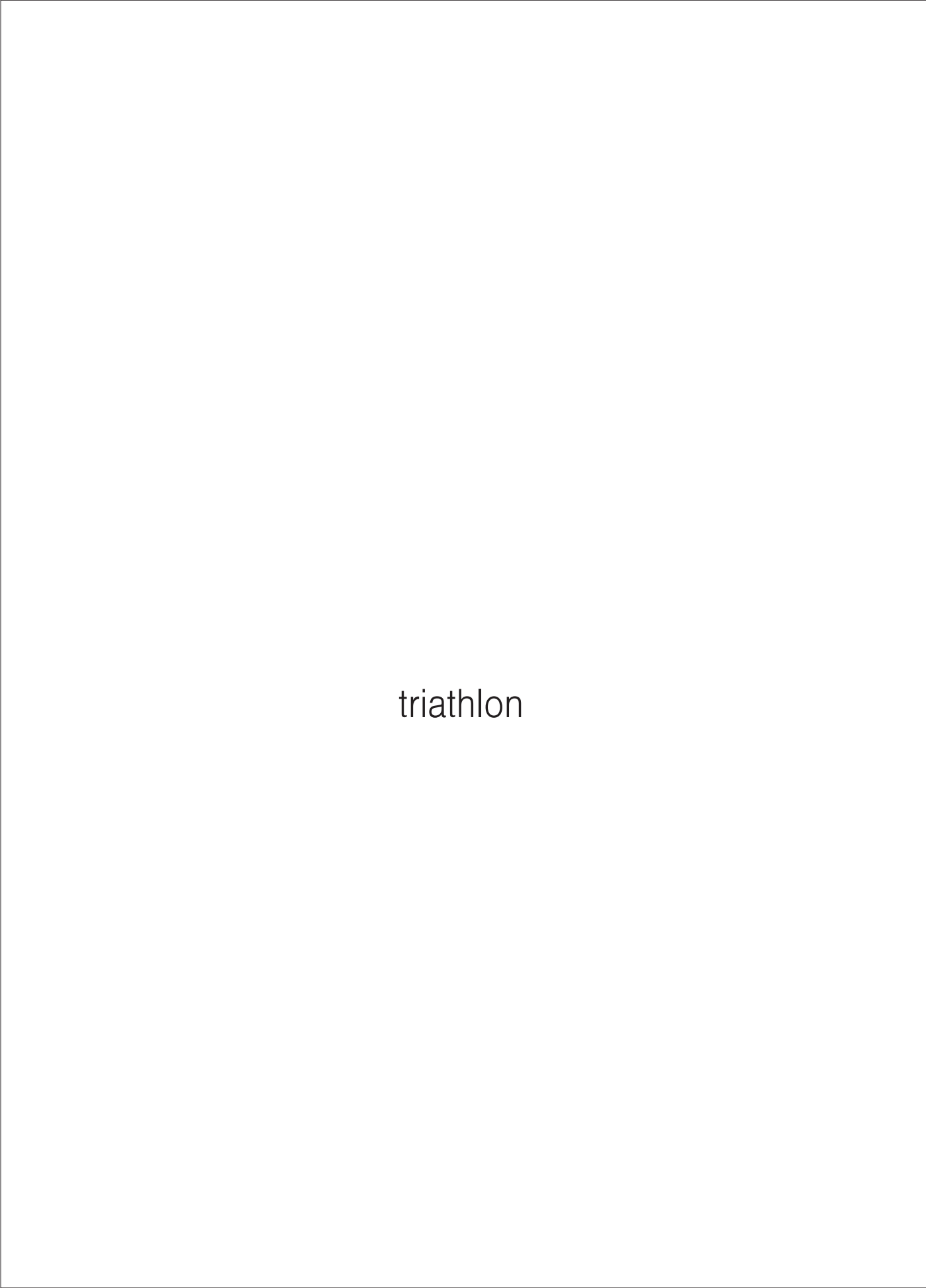
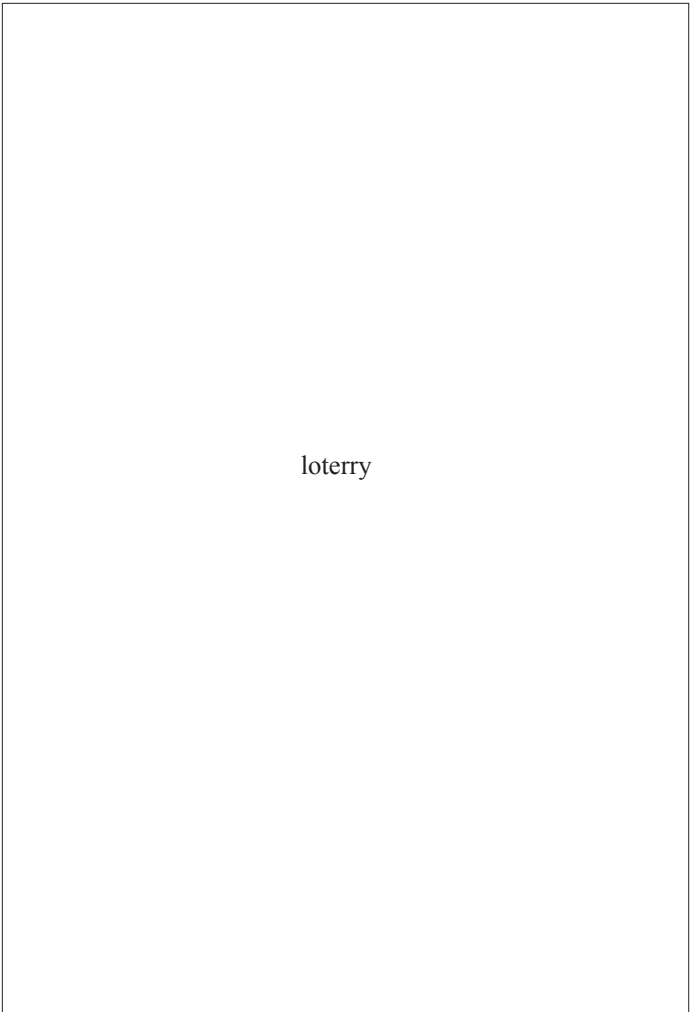


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+magenta/
blue

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+red



CDA: No findings yet on Palau Air

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Development Authority board of directors has begun its feasibility study on Palau Micronesia Air following the CNMI’s commitment to invest \$500,000 in the newly established airline.

CDA officials, who flew to Palau last week, said the agency has yet to make a full evaluation of the project.

CDA board chairman Sixto Igisomar, who convened a board meeting Saturday, said the issue is now being handled by a joint panel: the public finance committee headed by member Edwin Hofschneider and the economic development committee headed by Tom Quitugua.

“The board has not fully evaluated the project. We’ll wait for the recommendation by the joint committee,” said Igisomar.

Igisomar said the board, together with CDA executive director Mary Lou Ada, had a “very hectic” three-day visit to Palau as part of the project evaluation.

He said the CDA team met with Palau government leaders led by President Tommy Remengesau, as well as Palau Micronesia Air executives.

He said that CDA will

forward its findings to the Governor’s Office as soon as possible.

The CNMI Legislature earlier approved a joint resolution supporting the release of \$500,000 to PMA. In particular, the Legislature tasked CDA to borrow the money on behalf of the government from a regional bank, Pacific Islands Development Bank. The money would be used to buy 5,000 shares of capital stock from the airline firm.

Under the resolution, the CNMI government will shoulder the loan repayments.

The resolution also listed conditional provisions before the CDA can proceed with the borrowing:

- CDA must first evaluate the propriety and prudence of borrowing the half-million dollars, and identify where the money to repay the loan would come from.
- The funding source for the repayment of the loan must be approved by the Legislature through a bill.
- The legal ownership of the stocks may be vested in the CNMI government or in any of its constituent entities.
- The Palau government has to first put up the \$1 million it has committed to the new airline firm before the CNMI releases its investment share.

The CNMI government’s half-million-dollar equity investment in the new airline would entitle it to 10 percent of the company’s shares of common stocks and two seats on the firm’s Board of Directors.

Airline president Alan R. Seid said the money is needed to start the company, build the profit margin, and provide a strong reserve for the future.

Palau Micronesia Air is a corporation chartered under the laws of the Republic of Palau. It had issued 50,000 shares of stocks valued at \$100 per share, for a total initial capitalization

of \$5 million.

The airline firm has been seeking subscribers for its stocks from among governments and individuals in the region. So far it has obtained commitments for \$1.52 million in initial investment from private sources in Palau and Japan; \$500,000 from the Yapese government; \$1 million commitment from the Palauan government as a portion of Palau’s pending loan from the International Commercial Bank of China (Taiwan); \$500,000 commitment from the Pohnpeian government;

Saipan Community School’s honor roll in its 2nd quarter

Grade 6:
“A” Honor Roll – 3.50-3.99
GPA
Adeleyah Mojica
Micaela Demapan
Gyu Ri Kim

“B” Honor Roll – 3.00-3.49
GPA
Do Hee Kim
Kay Park
Lissane Loyola
Isabel Matsunaga
Sayaka Shimizu
Federico Fernandez

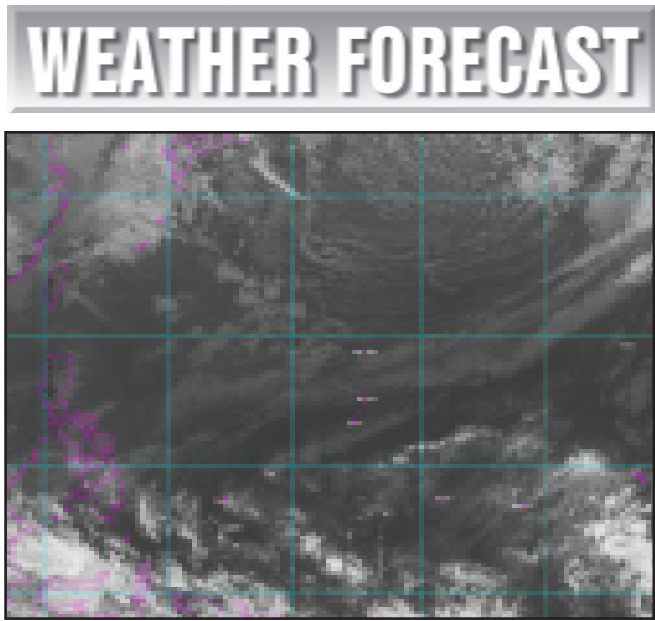
Grade 7:
“A” Honor Roll – 3.50-3.99
GPA
Champ Untalan
Min Sol Kim
Sung Hee An

Rezne Wong
Victoria Bellas

“B” Honor Roll – 3.00-3.49
GPA
J.D. Torres
Seong Bin Lee
Jason Quiblat
Min Joo Jung
Dencio Manglona


Grade 8:
Principal’s List – 4.00 GPA
O’Ronia Sikayun


“A” Honor Roll – 3.50-3.99
GPA
Soo Ji Ha
Soleana Demapan



PICTURE TIME: 1:00 A.M., FEBRUARY 1, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 144E.

A near-equatorial trough stretches from near 2n137e to the equator near 152e. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the trough are located south of Palau and Yap between the Equator and 5n from 130e to 144e. A weak trough of low pressure stretches from 7n167e to the equator near 170e. The trough combined with trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers in the southern Marshall Islands south of Majuro between the Equator and 6n from 167e to 180. A frontal system extends southwestward from near 25n157e to near 18n145e then continues as a shear line to near 14n130e. Extensive low clouds and widespread light showers are occurring along and up to 300 miles north of the boundary. Ahead of this boundary...an area of low clouds with light showers are occurring across the Mariana Islands.

 **SAIPAN AND TINIAN**
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 mph.

 **GUAM AND ROTA**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 mph.

 **PALAU**
Partly cloudy.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.















 **POHNPEI**
Partly cloudy.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.

 **YAP AND ULITHI**
Partly cloudy.
Winds: Northeast 10-15 kt.

 **KOSRAE**
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.

 **CHUUK**
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.

 **MAJURO**
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Cloudy	76F (24C)	61F (16C)
 Beijing	Rain	45F (7C)	25F (-4C)
 Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	66F (19C)	59F (15C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	83F (28C)	71F (22C)
 London, England	Partly Cloudy	52F (11C)	46F (8C)
 Los Angeles	Sunny	66F (19C)	44F (7C)
 Manila	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	68F (20C)
 Melbourne	Cloudy	69F (21C)	46F (8C)
 Miami	Rain	80F (27C)	64F (18C)
 New York City	Sunny	32F (0C)	24F (-4C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	25F (-4C)
 Paris	Partly Cloudy	49F (9C)	41F (5C)
 Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	38F (3C)
 Rome	Cloudy	54F (12C)	45F (7C)
 Salem, Oregon	Showers	46F (8C)	38F (3C)
 San Francisco	Cloudy	53F (12C)	48F (9C)
 Seoul	Cloudy	43F (4C)	25F (-4C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	32F (0C)
 Washington, DC	Sunny	34F (1C)	24F (-4C)

2004 Miss Teen CNMI candidates presented

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Give way to the five Saipan candidates vying for the 2004 Miss Teen CNMI crown as they unveiled their plans, dreams, and hopes in joining this year's competition.

The five candidates were presented to the public Saturday at the Multi-Purpose Center, where they took center stage to talk about how they plan to help the CNMI's youths through various community-based activities.

This year's candidates are Divana Dela Cruz, Christal Leon Guerrero, Chanel Cabrera, Jerbeth De Leon, and Jocelyn Castro. Winners of the Miss Teen Tinian and Miss Teen Rota would be joining the Saipan candidates during the April 17, 2004 coronation night.

According to Miss Teen CNMI president Noby Crisostomo, Tinian and Rota would have their own Ms. Teen contests—a first—and winners of these contests would be sent to Saipan for the Miss Teen CNMI tilt.

With this year's theme "Bonitas de Islas Marianas," Crisostomo hopes to highlight during the pageant the Spanish influence on the local culture.

"This year's theme is Spanish so we can highlight that part of our culture and tradition that was imparted by the Spaniards. We also hope to bring here what we learned from the Miss Antillas beauty contest," Crisostomo explained.

Miss Teen CNMI 2003 Remeylyn Julene Guerrero had competed in the Miss Antillas International Beauty Pageant in Venezuela, where she won second place.

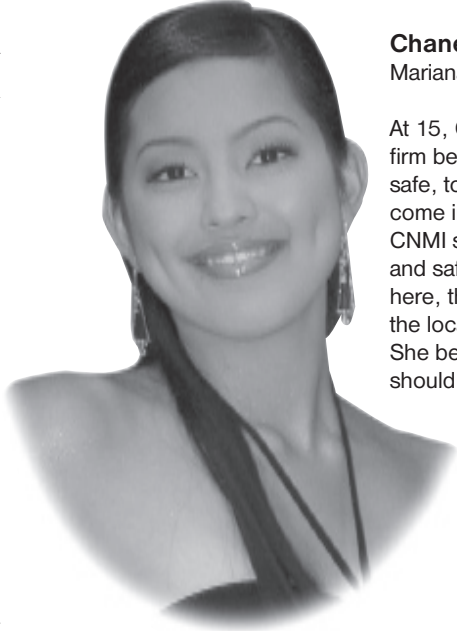
Also present during the media presentation Saturday was House Rep. Janet Maratita, who advised all contestants to face their fears and mistakes. Maratita also vowed to find ways on how to make Miss Teen CNMI candidates active in various community events.

Crisostomo said that after the coronation night on April 17, the 2004 Miss Teen-CNMI would fly to Venezuela the following month to compete in the 2004 Miss Antilles International.

He added that winners in the 2004 Miss Teen-CNMI should be physically and mentally prepared to represent the Northern Marianas in the international pageant.

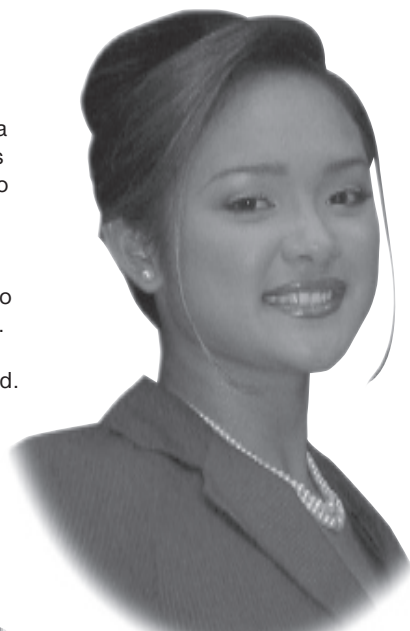
Ms. Teen-CNMI—the local pageant search that capitalizes on the islands' attractive and spirited school-aged girls—was revived in 2002 after five years of dormancy.

Previous winners of the contest are Anita Jones Ayuyu, Cecilia Masga, Cecilia Taitano,



Chanel Cabrera, 15
Marianas High School

At 15, Chanel stands 5'9 and a firm believer that if the CNMI is safe, tourists would continue to come in. She believes that the CNMI should be kept beautiful and safe and once tourists are here, they can be introduced to the local culture and traditions. She believes that the CNMI should be exposed to the world.



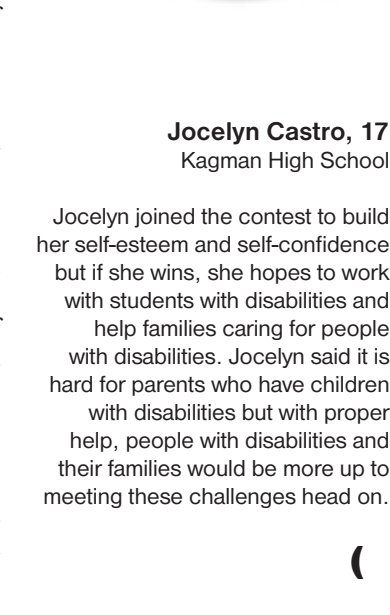
Divana Dela Cruz, 16
Marianas High School

If she is crowned Miss Teen CNMI 2004, Divana hopes to organize a group that would help prevent suicide among the youth. Divana said flyers would be passed around to raise awareness in the



Jerbeth De Leon, 16
Marianas High School

Jerbeth is focusing on peer pressure as a problem she believes should be resolved to prevent teens from being involved in alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse. She said peer pressure comes in different forms and shapes and continues to haunt the younger generation.



Jocelyn Castro, 17
Kagman High School

Jocelyn joined the contest to build her self-esteem and self-confidence but if she wins, she hopes to work with students with disabilities and help families caring for people with disabilities. Jocelyn said it is hard for parents who have children with disabilities but with proper help, people with disabilities and their families would be more up to meeting these challenges head on.



Christal Leon Guerrero, 15
Kagman High School

Christal said that if she wins, she would do her best to join and establish organizations that would prevent domestic violence in the Commonwealth. Christal will also try her best to promote the local culture.



cars

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XIV, Issue No. 061

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Regrettable reactions

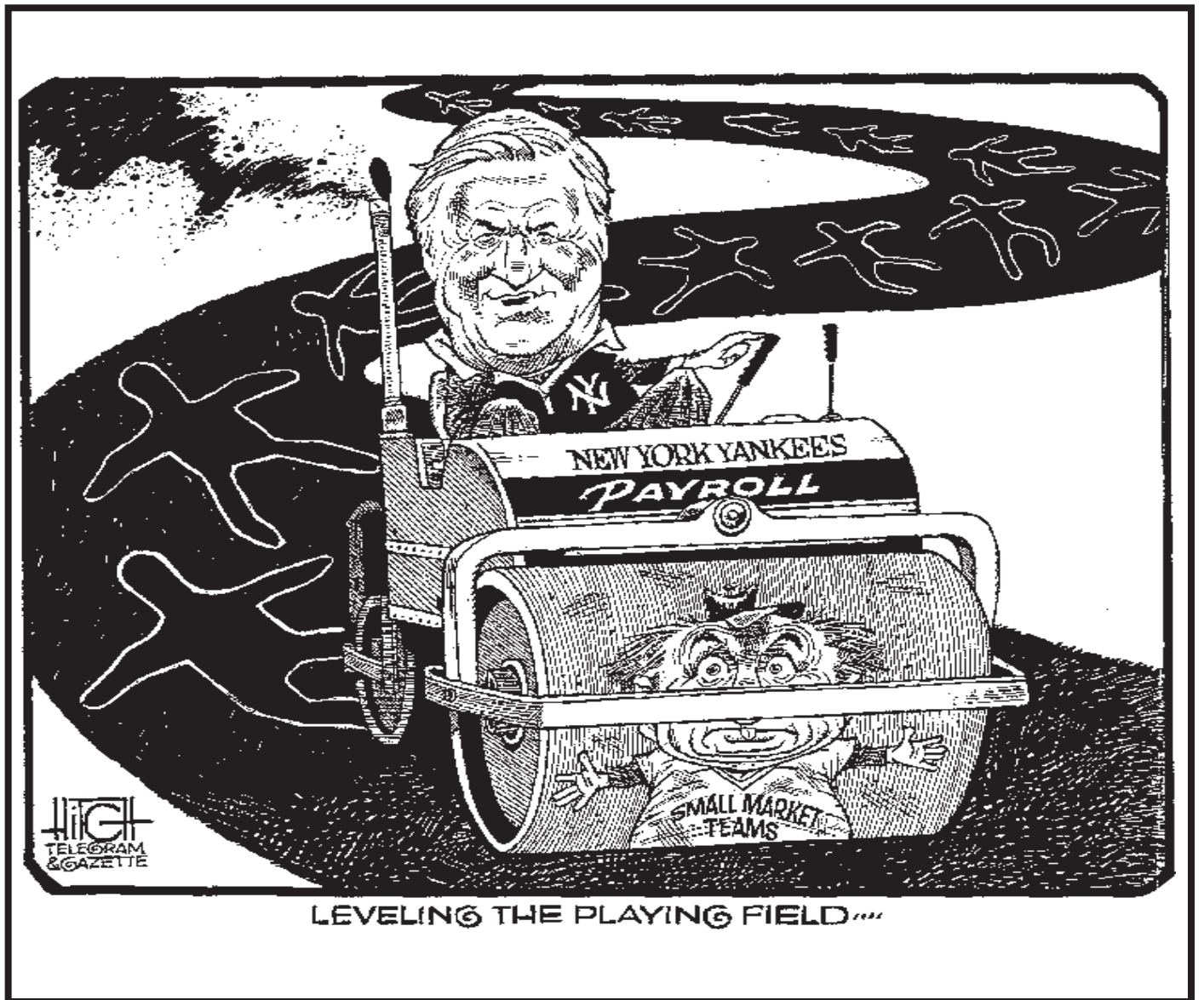
For all the front-page headlines, there wasn't anything particularly surprising in Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan's warning Wednesday that the government can't afford the Social Security benefits it has promised and that benefits will need to be curtailed. He's sounded this alarm before, correctly so. Sadly, there also wasn't anything surprising in the reaction of the presidential candidates, both President Bush and his Democratic rivals, to Greenspan's statements: All of them kept as far as possible from any hint of endorsing a change in benefits, however reasonable.

Greenspan noted that the leading edge of the baby-boom generation will begin to be eligible for Social Security benefits in 2008 and that the demands on both Social Security and Medicare will grow inexorably in the following years, so "we will eventually have no choice but to make significant structural adjustments in the major retirement programs." He suggested two modest changes that would ease, but not solve, the problem without unfairly punishing those on the brink of retirement. The first is changing the way Social Security benefits are adjusted to keep pace with inflation, replacing the existing consumer price index, which overstates increases in the cost of living, with a new, more accurate measure. The second is increasing the retirement age to reflect longer life expectancy; Greenspan suggested a form of indexing that would keep steady the ratio of years worked to years in retirement. Both suggestions are sensible, and both are rather standard fare in discussions of how to fix Social Security.

From the reaction, though, you would have thought Greenspan, who's about to turn 78 himself, had suggested taking old people out and shooting them. "No matter what was said in Washington just this morning, the wrong way to cut the deficit is to cut Social Security benefits," said Sen. John F. Kerry, D-Mass. "If I'm president, we're simply not going to do it." Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., said it was "an outrage for him to suggest that we should extend George Bush's tax cuts on unearned wealth while cutting Social Security benefits that working people earn." President Bush hastened to reiterate that he had no intention of changing benefits for those at or near retirement age—Greenspan also had said he didn't want to make changes for that group—and to restate his expensive proposal for private savings accounts.

Greenspan argues for making the Bush tax cuts permanent, and there we differ with him. Even without the tax cuts, Social Security was unsustainable; making all the cuts permanent deepens the hole. Indeed, Greenspan's modest but apparently incendiary suggestions underscore the magnitude of the challenge: The cost of the tax cuts would be about \$400 billion in 2014, while the adjustments he proposes, even under a generous interpretation, would save less than \$75 billion. But at least Greenspan—unlike the president and his allies—acknowledges the need for trade-offs.

(c) 2004, The Washington Post



Shouldering the load, and the rifle

By MAX BOOT

Special to the Los Angeles Times

This year it's Haiti. Last year it was Liberia. Before that it was Sierra Leone, Congo, Rwanda and Somalia. The world is full of failed states where life is nasty, brutish and short. Powerful nations know they cannot ignore these areas, not only for moral reasons but also because problems spill over into their own back yards, by way of communicable diseases, refugees and—worst of all—terrorists and weapons of mass destruction. But what are they supposed to do about these humanitarian catastrophes?

A hundred years ago the answer was obvious: A "civilized" country would colonize an "uncivilized" one. Today there is little eagerness in the West to take on what Rudyard Kipling called "the white man's burden." So, instead of acting decisively, we muddle through, passing high-minded resolutions at the United Nations and occasionally sending a few troops. It is this half-hearted approach that allowed the genocide in Rwanda and Bosnia and lesser horrors from Liberia to Haiti.

Isn't it about time we got serious about dealing with failed states? If we did, we would have to devise both national and international remedies.

Nationally, the United States needs to create a standing agency devoted to nation-building; it should have a director with the authority to force disparate departments in the U.S. government to work together, something that didn't happen before the invasion of Iraq. The military too needs to devote more attention to nation-building, perhaps by adopting a proposal from the Pentagon's Office of Force Transformation to add a couple of divisions specially trained for peacekeeping.

The job of policing the globe is too big for one country, however, and the United States needs more help from its allies. Washington should encourage regional powers to assume responsibility for their own back yards—Australia in Southeast Asia, Nigeria in West Africa, South Africa in southern Africa, and so on. Some of this has already been happening—for instance, the Australian interventions in East Timor and the Solomon Islands. The United States provided support for those missions but no troops—a good bargain from our standpoint.

There are also international organizations that can assist. NATO is creating a 21,000-strong Response Force. The European Union wants to follow suit. And the Pentagon has discussed setting up an International Peacekeeping Force with contributions from the U.S.

and allied nations, though how it would work remains unclear.

Don't forget the United Nations. It currently deploys more than 45,000 peacekeepers, but their effectiveness is severely limited because they are supposed to enforce existing peace accords and stay strictly neutral even if one party is clearly at fault. This does nothing to help in places like Rwanda and Haiti, where there is no peace to enforce. The idea of creating a more robust U.N. force capable of smiting aggressors has been around since the late 1940s. It got a brief burst of life in the early 1990s after the end of the Cold War, but it was entombed after the United Nations was blamed for failures in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia.

It's time to resurrect the idea of a standing U.N. army, as a supplement, if not replacement, for the other forces mentioned above. The key to making it work would be eschewing the old United Nations way of doing things, which consists of asking for military contributions from a lot of countries with minimal capabilities, no record of working together and differing strategic interests. This produces low-quality blue helmets that are the laughingstock of thugs everywhere.

The United Nations needs a tough, professional force like the French Foreign Legion that would not quail before Haitian gang leaders or Serbian ethnic-cleansers. Members of such an outfit would have to be recruited on merit and trained together; it could not be cobbled together at the last minute from the military riffraff of Third World dictatorships. To make it work, the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations would have to beef up its command, intelligence and logistical capabilities. The United Nations would also need to improve its ability to run failed states in a Kosovo-style receivership.

This proposal may seem like wishful thinking, not only because the United Nations is so slow to change but also because there is so much animus toward that organization in the United States, which would have to sign off on this new force. If even the "multilateral" Clintonites eschewed this idea, what chance is there that it will be embraced by the "unilateral" Bushies? Not much, perhaps, but then George W. Bush used to oppose nation-building altogether—until he realized that it was in America's interest.

Likewise, beefing up peacekeeping capacity is very much in our interest. That would enable us to avoid the dilemma we face today in Haiti: either do nothing and let violence explode or take on a burden—fixing things ourselves—that we're not prepared to shoulder. There has to be a better way. I hope we find it before the next disaster strikes.

Boot is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Sometimes it's good to step back and think

First, why is there so much hysteria surrounding Mel Gibson's new movie about the crucifixion? Granted, I penned a few of my own thoughts about the movie just the other day. But when I opened the papers Thursday, I saw at least another thousand articles analyzing the movie from top to bottom. Is it true to history, or a reflection of some perverted vision of Gibson's? Is it anti-Semitic or likely to arouse anti-Semitism? Does the relentless violence overwhelm everything else in the movie? And what is the film's real message? The movie only just opened, and I'm already tired of it.

Such publicity has got to be great for ticket sales, however, unless hordes of people are seen running from the theaters retching and sobbing from what's being described as the movie's almost pornographic brutality. Come to think of it, I'm beginning to wonder if I want to see it.

Second, why has President Bush decided to support a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriages? OK, we know why.

He's playing to his conservative base. But at a time when civil-rights victories for gays are being won almost daily,

the president is out of step with the direction of history. It's true that Americans remain divided over the issue of same-sex marriage. But in myriad ways they are moving toward accepting it, whether they realize it or not. What's more, this amendment will never become part of the constitution. Remember the Equal Rights Amendment? And that was for a noble cause. Bush's behavior is simply regressive.

I'm also reflecting on why John Edwards is still in the presidential race. Having won only one state to John Kerry's 18, the North Carolina senator looks to me like a hopeless longs hot, despite having a more winning personality than Kerry's. I gather Edwards is holding on for the big states and for the Southern states to follow. We've already seen how unpredictable this year's presidential contest can be, and journalists love to see a story drag on for as long as possible. But I can't shake the feeling that, for Edwards, the fat lady has already sung.

As I follow the murder trial of former pro-basketball player Jayson Williams, I'm taking stock of the appalling lack of character that I'm seeing in so many of our public figures—bishops, CEOs, movie stars, athletes. Williams shot his limousine driver in what was clearly an accident. The question is whether he acted with such reckless disregard for human life that he should be convicted of manslaughter.

I've been struck by the white cross that Williams wears at his neck, a sign that he's either gotten religion or wants us to believe he has. And I'm dismayed by his history of playing with guns while intoxicated. Most revealing was the eyewitness testimony about how he frantically tried to cover up his role in the shooting—putting the dying man's fingers on the gun, concocting a suicide story and disposing of his own clothes. I wonder if Williams has considered that if he had been equally diligent about summoning help for the victim, the man might have lived.

Finally, at Columbia University, black and Latino students are seething over a series of on-campus statements and events that they consider racially offensive. One involved a cartoon in a student newspaper that spoofed Black History Month. Some college students are always going to be arrogant, patronizing and at times bigoted, and college students as a whole are a perpetually aggrieved and thin-skinned bunch. So there will always be clashes such as these.

By SHERYL MCCARTHY
Newsday

McCarthy is a Newsday



Games children play

Stomping like Bantu warriors on a safari, spectators at last Saturday's basketball tournament of the participating Saipan Elementary Schools shook up the Ada Gym bleachers in a syncopated percussion of wild native beats.

Shrieks of delight echoed from the rafters as the roars of approval over a completed basket dominated the sound waves bouncing between the walls. Pristine voices emitting out of uninhibited chest chambers of excited players naturally flowed out as rubber shoes streaked across the floor and shouts from a full court press proved that there was more volume behind those otherwise reluctant mousy voices in classroom recitations than meets the ear.

Yes, they double-dribbled, walked and ran with the ball, enough to dismay the dedicated couch potato sports' connoisseur. But these were children instinctively and gracefully at play revealing DNA conditioning mother nature had been working on for several generations of chromosomal admixing, orchestrating the make up of these distant cousins of the gazelle.

No one was called stationary in the lanes as the 32-minute games were played at fast break pace. The students came to play, and that they did.

For our San Vicente School players, we sent them out with the admonition that, like the Olympic Games which was an item in the past week's Social Studies lesson, they were there to play for the honor of the school. That honor was best served by how they played more than whether their score topped that of the opposing team.

But for the discerning eyes, there were other games at play that were noticeable, subtle but insidious and definitely deleterious to our social well-being. Overlay of delimiting societal influence reared up its ugly Medusa hydra heads. One of these is the notion that the only way to measure winning is to best the other team.

Next door at the Palacios field, Baseball's Little League teams simultaneously played their games. Running into one of my students in the parking lot, properly bedecked in the standard diamond slider get-up, I asked: "Did you win?" He replied: "32-nothing; our team scored negative 32!" Ignoring the rather mindful "spin." I asked again: "Yes, but did you win, did you play well?" He smiled and replied positively. Somehow, I felt like we exchanged knowing looks.

Back to the auditorium and running into one of the parents on her way out, she blurted: "We lost!" "Yes, but didn't they have fun? Didn't we all have fun?" I said, as she walked away obviously disappointed with her child's team and performance, not to mention the obviously laid back, seemingly non-competitive head coach.

Objectively, our girls' team played an evenly matched game. We made two points less than the other team in a raucous and riotous display of both grace and awkwardness from both teams. Of the eight days of two-hour after-school organizational and practice sessions, sharing one open-air full court with the boy's team, skirmishing with the alternating effects of rain and sun, we were lucky to clock in a quarter of actual playing time. Yet, the teamwork on the floor transcended the petty bickering and undercurrent of discord that appeared during our team formation. The inexperience which showed up at the start in such declaratives as, "You mean, the boys are going to be watching!" faded with the actual reality of having to dribble and pass the ball to one's teammates. As one player honestly said afterwards: "I passed to avoid the menace of five other creatures descending on you wanting to wrest the ball away."

The boys' team did not fare so well. We had more than 20 students who signed up. We thought that a school would be able to field a couple of teams, as was the case in previous years. Having

Marriage isn't a simple matter among gays

By ROXXIE ROSEN

Special to Newsday

So my girlfriend asked me over dinner if I thought that having legal civil unions should be enough for us. "Honey," she said after the appetizers, "do you believe in gay marriage, too?"

I had to think. Could I, someone who has lived outside the world of legally sanctioned relationships her entire life, actually decide to care? I suppose that the words: "Marry me!" whispered in a moment of love must mean something. But after 40-plus years of living "in the life," "worshiping at the church," wearing black pants in the '70s to signal that I was a lesbian, and slipping in and out of gay and lesbian bars, not to mention trying to avoid job discrimination, harassment on the streets or becoming a victim of homophobic violence, I wasn't sure I'd ever really considered it.

I was speechless for a moment as I considered whether my straight women friends had my problems. Did they ever have to worry that their partner would wake up in the morning and wear their shoes, take their last tampon or run off in their clothes?

For lesbians, the oh-so-narrow dating pool has consequences. If you live and love in this tiny world and the rest of the country is somewhat hostile to it, then you also have a much smaller group of people to share your friendships with. In other words, if your relationship doesn't work out, you may still need these people in your lives as friends. That's pressure.

By JAIME R. VERGARA

Vergara is a Social Studies 6th grade teacher at San Vicente Elementary School and writes a regular column for the Saipan Tribune.



opted for the virtues of broad participation, our roster exceeded the recommended 15 players. Wanting to please both student and their parents, we played everyone. Teamwork was not as coordinated as a closer knitted group would normally display. If the boys' cooperative instincts were not too evident, their self-conscious pursuit for bragging rights was. A lifelong habit of measuring performance by besting another had individual players opting for solo performances more than team coordination. After the game, excuses and pointing to individuals as responsible for the "loss" were widely expressed.

Win or lose as the only perspective to gauge how one performed is so deeply engrained that even the historical conflict between Sparta vs. Athens that proved to be the downfall of ancient Greek civilization is lost. This is especially re-enforced as we hear the same conflict around the world from our Class' NPR morning news broadcast, even depicting the political game played out in the contemporary cleavage that separates the Department of Defense and the State Department in our US Federal Government.

Most games, particularly those now played by the X-box generation are relentless in promoting this "All or Nothing" perspective toward winning. Of course, that should not be a surprise. Did not one of our Teachers Rep candidates promote his candidacy as a case of "Me or Nothing," consequently alienating a considerable portion of his constituency?

Like the ancient Athenians, we led our athletes to Ada Gym with a diminished stress on the Win/Lose dichotomy, to the virtue of full participation of our athletes in the game. (The former is a Spartan virtue that developed rigorous training and discipline of physical reflexes but also perpetuated less admirable vengeful traits toward the "outsiders" that flowered later into the Teutonic claims of Aryan superiority.) Not surprisingly, the finger pointing that followed the boys' game was not unlike the post-1949 question on "who lost China," or the continuing debate that now seem to trail Sen. Kerry's campaign for the presidency, his post-war stance on who "lost Vietnam."

Sun Tzu's "Art of War" advises that one should never put an opponent on a corner without any means of escape. After all, today's enemy is best treated if made tomorrow's ally rather than an avenging scimitar, which makes of feuds endless cycles.

Like a tableau that reads "The Lord of the Flies redux," the innocence that seemed so natural during the games, deteriorated into vicious unsportsmanlike conduct of whisperings and name-calling. Is the latter a part of the natural playfulness of children? I think not. We taught our children the games they play. Unfortunately, we seem to pass on unconscious, or, at least, unexamined games more than intentional ones. Like everything else, we always have choices. Perhaps, we can be wiser in the games we play. Maybe it is time we look at the Gameboy we last bought, and the game websites our children frequent.

Meanwhile, Saipan Elems, meet you at the volleyball net end of March.

Saipan Tribune

CHINA'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Rosen is the founder of Girljock Magazine and editor of "Girljock: The Book."

Hawaii's Lingle to push for more Compact impact aid

HONOLULU, Hawaii (AP)—While Hawaii didn't get as much money as it wanted from the federal government to provide services for Micronesian and Marshallese immigrants, that won't deter the state from continuing to push for more aid, Gov. Linda Lingle says.

"In politics, we deal with it all the time—you don't get everything you want all the time," Lingle said. "But you need to be going in the right direction, and the agreement certainly was going in the right direction from my point of view."

Lingle was speaking of the federal government's allocation of \$30 million to be divided among Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands to provide social services for Micronesian and Marshallese immigrants who arrive on their shores under the Compacts of Free Association.

The compacts—which allow Mi-

cronesians and Marshallese to freely come to the United States and its territories—were first negotiated in 1986 and renewed last month by the Bush administration. They recognize the island nations' independence and set forth a financial and tactical relationship between their governments and the U.S. government.

Upon renewal, the compacts were amended to include \$30 million for Hawaii and the other territories, which have long lobbied the U.S. government to help foot the bill for providing education, health and other services for immigrants.

Guam received the highest share of the funds, \$14.2 million, based on the number of immigrants who live there. Hawaii received \$10.5 million.

The distribution formula caused a rift between the U.S. Department of the Interior, which oversees Insular Affairs, and Hawaii's congressional

delegation, which led to the cancellation of a planned ceremony last week in Honolulu to announce the grants.

Lingle agreed that \$10.5 million won't cover the costs of providing for immigrants, but it still is more than Hawaii has received in the past.

"I don't think anybody felt they got enough," Lingle said at a news conference last week, flanked by Northern Marianas Gov. Juan Babauta and American Samoa Gov. Togiola Tulafono.

"As the congressional delegation stated, they will be working hard to get additional funding in the future," she said. "But it was more than we were getting previously by a substantial amount, so it's progress in the right direction."

In Hawaii, officials say the state spent about \$32 million in 2002 providing services for a population of about 7,000 Marshallese, and a slightly smaller number of Micronesians.

On a personal level, he said he finds the Pacific Gateway "a good project," but he indicated that much more needs to be done for the project to take off. "It's a good project. Beautiful. The idea is good but as to the numbers...that's the question."

Igisomar said CDA will write to Gov. Juan N. Babauta informing him about the CDA's intent to work with NMC on the issue.

Babauta earlier asked the CDA board to help NMC secure interim financing to ensure that the Pacific Gateway gets started.

"CDA may be able to play a role by providing a guarantee of interim financing, while the Board of Regents negotiates with NMIRF and MPLT and while the board waits for a response to the [loan] application with USDA," said the governor in a Jan. 20, letter.

He said the interim financing would ensure that the project's opening—January 2005—would no longer be delayed.

The NMC, which entered into

feeding on seagrass. Trianni concludes that the dolphin was starving, could not pursue fish and thus chose to feed on seagrass," it added.

Co-authored by Kurt Kessler, Trianni's article also told of the frequent stranding of spinner dolphins in the Saipan lagoon during low tide, the DLNR said. The article reportedly explained three recent stranding of dolphins, which could have died had DFW staff not been able to herd the creatures to open sea.

The DLNR commended Trianni for his research work for the DFW, disclosing that the marine biologist has authored five articles published in scientific journals in the past 18 months.

LAND

From Page 1

CDA officials authorized to sign for the bond money withdrawals, were part of the team that went to Palau last week to evaluate the viability of Palau Micronesia Air.

The Palau-based airline has obtained an investment commitment of \$500,000 from the CNMI government.

To prevent any future delays in the release of funds, the board passed a resolution Saturday authorizing other CDA officials to sign off MPLA requests.

Meantime, MPLA commissioner Henry S. Hofschneider said Friday that the CDA's signature had authorized BoG to place the requested amount on MPLA's special account for land compensation.

He said that, of 62 land claimants who received MPLA compensation offers, 43 have accepted the offers, while nine have rejected them.

Those who have accepted the offers will begin to receive their payments this week.

Hofschneider said those who will get their claims need to present their Social Security number or a taxpayer's identification card. Concerned individuals can claim their compensation at the MPLA office, located at the ground floor of Sablan Building in Chalan Kanoa.

"They have to present SSS or Tax ID's when they come," said Hofschneider.

The Attorney General's Office earlier advised land claimants to report their total compensation to the government for tax purposes.

The AGO said recipients need to

seek assistance from a tax professional to determine their estimated tax payment.

"It's very important that they know about it now. So we're reminding them to seek the advise of a tax professional before they start spending their money...to avoid getting into financial trouble later," said Attorney General Pam Brown.

The AGO said that under the U.S. and CNMI laws, recipients are required to report such payments on their income tax returns or gross revenue tax return.

Tax payment differs depending whether the compensation is for land or for accumulated interest on the payments for the land or whether the recipient is a business or an individual.

The MPLA board earlier approved 75 folders for immediate land compensation after the signing and release of the \$40-million bond.

Of the total amount, only about \$27 million will be used for land compensation since \$11 million has been allotted for a pending prison project. The bond underwriter also deducted \$1.5 million for cost of the bond issuance.

The government is given 30 years to pay off the loan at an annual interest of 6.75 percent.

The first batch of claimants are landowners whose lands were acquired by the CNMI government for rights-of-way. The Land Compensation Act mandates the government to prioritize the payment for lands used for rights-of-way.

The next would be those whose lands were acquired for ponding basins. Lastly, the government will settle with landowners of wetlands and other claims. The MPLA has listed some 120 eligible land claimants in the CNMI.

and-work program in the CNMI.

Wang said they had thought of returning to China but had reconsidered because "nothing" awaits them there. Besides, they said they have used up their savings just to come to the CNMI. "How can we go back when we have no money. We've used up our life savings," he said.

Wang said that while they want to study and get a degree in the CNMI—as they had planned—they have zero budget now to pursue it.

He said only two of them had been able to enroll at the Northern Marianas College.

areas of the lagoon," Trianni said.

In commending Trianni, the DLNR also disclosed the marine biologist's work on the sea cucumber fishery in Rota, which was published by the South Pacific Commission Beche-de-Mer Bulletin. The department also mentioned Trianni's article evaluating the sea cucumber resource on Saipan, which was published in the proceedings of the 9th International Coral Reef Symposium.

The DLNR said Trianni has also authored an article that focused on collected data in connection with the trochus season on Saipan, which was published in the South Pacific Commission's Trochus Bulletin.

CDA

From Page 1

tor Mary Lou Ada to contact NMC on the issue.

Going into an interim financing for NMC, according to Igisomar, is not easy as it put assets at risk.

"The question there is, 'Whose assets are going to be in the hook? Is it the CNMI's or CDA's?' If it's CNMI, that needs legislative approval. And that takes time. If it's CDA, that would mean freezing up assets and that involves great risks. It's definitely no simple matter," he said.

He said it would help if NMC could decide early on as to its funding prospects with MPLT and NMIRF.

The involvement of MPLT and NMIRF in the financing equation may, however, be put in question. "There's a question of 'Can they actually assist?' Hopefully, they can make a quick decision whether they could do it. They [MPLT, NMIRF, NMC] need to agree where they stand," said Igisomar.

DEAD

From Page 1

Natural Resources disclosed this finding, based on an article by Michael Trianni, a research scientist and senior marine biologist at the Division of Fish and Wildlife. The DLNR said the article was published in the scientific journal *Micronesica*.

"The article tells of the autopsy on a dead dolphin with several injuries and the discovery that dolphins eat seagrass when injured and unable to catch fish," the DLNR said.

"The article also explains that a scientific literature search produced no other publications reporting dolphins

The agency disclosed that Trianni authored an article on reef fish abundance in CNMI's marine protected areas, which was published in Australia as part of the proceedings of the World Congress on Aquatic Protected Areas.

The DLNR explained that the article dealt with methods used to determine the increase in reef fish population, including that on the Managaha Marine Conservation Area.

"The article acknowledges the important contributions to the aquatic protected area reef fish surveys made by the DFW reef fish survey team composed of Jacinto Taman, Tony Flores, Rudy Pangelinan, Chris Alepuyo,

MOST

From Page 1

on island pending the resolution of their court case against SU officials.

He said they were forced to vacate their housing in Susupe on Jan. 29 because its power connection had been cut. "We couldn't stay there because they cut the power supply," he said. "Now we're separated. We live far from each other."

The students earlier filed fraud charges against SU founder Park Soon Kyun, who allegedly promised them a state-of-the-art university and a study-

Michael Tenorio, Gus Aguon and Dr. Kate Moots," the DLNR added.

Trianni said the emphasis of his work on fishery protection and development at the DFW is geared toward sustainable uses of fish resources. He noted the ban on gill nets and fishing with scuba gear, which the DLNR currently implements.

"The ban on the use of gill nets has resulted in many more fishermen being able to catch seasonal fish such as the scad mackerel and juvenile jacks for prolonged periods of time. The marine protected areas, which are no-take zones, enable fish stocks to grow to maturity, reproduce and over time migrate and seed depleted

Saipan Tribune Make it your **DAILY** habit.

An evening of Japanese classical music

Friends of the Arts invites the community to a special performance of the Sankyoku Chamber Music Ensemble in a concert of Japanese classical music, Sunday, March 7, at the Charley’s Cabaret of the Pacific Islands Club.

Koumei and Rikako Takemura, renowned Japanese clas-

sical musicians, will present a concert featuring the hauntingly beautiful music of the koto, shamisen, and shakuhachi.

The performance is scheduled from 5pm to 7pm and guests are encouraged to remain and enjoy the Magellan Room evening buffet following the show.

Concert ticket prices are \$20 for adults and \$10 for

students and children. Buffet tickets are offered for a reduced priced of \$20 per person.

Tickets may be obtained from Friends of the Arts board members, Japanese Society of the Northern Marianas members, and the Pacific Islands Club.

The Takemura ensemble

performs to sell-out audiences throughout Japan and tours widely both in Japan and throughout the world. This classical music genre arose nearly 400 years ago and was a featured element of the artistic traditions at the imperial court. For older listeners the melodies will recall memories of music

heard in the Commonwealth during the prosperous years of the Japanese administration.

This performance caps the ensemble’s tour to the CNMI, which includes special performances for the man’amko and for high school and college students. The group will also perform on Tinian and Rota.

Their tour is made possible through the support of the Japan Foundation, Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture, Meitetsu Fleming, Saipan Grand Hotel, Marianas Visitor’s Authority, Pacific Development Inc., SNE Saipan Company, Ltd., the Pacific Islands Club, and Friends of the Arts.

For tickets or further information, contact event coordinators Sachiko Adachi (235-2459 telephone & fax), e-mail at sachiko@itecnmi.com or mailto:sachiko@itecnmi.com or Melody Actouka at NMC:

HeadStart registration set

The Head Start Program is announcing the schedule of its recruitment of children to register for school year 2004-2005. Registration hours start at 8am-3pm at all centers from Monday thru Friday.

Dates	Activity and Location
March 1-12	Registration for Returnees (All Centers are 8am-3pm)
March 15-19	Registration for Chalan Kanoa Center 4 yrs old.
March 22-26	Registration for Garapan Center 4 yrs old.
March 29-30	Registration for San Vicente Center 4 yrs old.
April 2	Registration for Oleai Center 4 yrs old.
April 5-9	Registration for San Antonio Center 4 yrs old.
April 19-20	Registration for Tanapag Center 4 yrs old.
April 21-22	Registration for San Roque Center 4 yrs old.
May 3-20	Selection and Enrollment (Multi-Purpose Center)
	Health & Behavioral Screenings (9am to 3pm)
May 23-30	Open Registration (At Center Sites/Main Office)
	3&4 yrs old=waiting list (8am to 3pm)
	Only parents and/or legal guardians are authorized to register their child/ren.
	Documents needed for registration are: child’s birth certificate; immunization record; Social Security number of parent; hospital number and medical insurance (if any); parent’s/guardians’ verification of income earned for the 12 months and other public assistance, e.g. Medicaid or nutrition program; passport/visa for nonresident.
	Legal guardians must also provide a notarized document stipulating the guardianship of the child/ren, while parents of children with disability are required to bring their child’s IEP.
	Entrance Age: Any child who meets the eligibility/section requirements of the Head Start at the beginning of a school year if the child’s third or fourth birthday occurs on or before August 31 st . of the year for which entrance application is made.
	For more information re-

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Business

Business

US faces WTO-approved sanctions

By **MARTIN CRUTSINGER**
AP ECONOMICS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—For the first time, the United States will be hit with trade sanctions approved by the World Trade Organization because of a fight in Congress over how to restructure \$5 billion in corporate tax breaks.

Starting Monday, a wide range of U.S. exports to Europe from roller skates to jewelry, steel, textiles and various farm products will be subject to a 5 percent penalty tariff that will ratchet higher by 1 percentage point each month over the next year unless Congress acts.

EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy, who wrapped up meetings with key lawmakers

and administration officials on Friday, insisted that the penalty tariffs were being imposed only reluctantly and would be lifted as soon as Congress passes a WTO-compatible tax law dealing with U.S. corporations.

"We have been extremely patient, but there is no way we can avoid these sanctions which will hopefully concentrate minds on the urgency of passing legislation," Lamy told reporters late Friday.

But resolution of the issue could be months away, given the wide difference of opinions among Republicans who control Congress.

The Bush administration, already being pummeled for pursuing trade policies which

Democratic presidential candidates are blaming for the loss of millions of U.S. manufacturing jobs, expressed disappointment that the EU had gone ahead with retaliatory tariffs while Congress was considering replacement legislation.

"We regret that they are moving forward," said Richard Mills, spokesman for U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick.

The problem in Congress stems from competing visions of which U.S. corporations should be helped by the replacement legislation for exporter tax breaks. The WTO ruled them illegal four years ago. The cost of the breaks at the time was estimated at \$4

billion annually, a price tag that has now risen to \$5 billion annually.

Many in Congress want to target substitute corporate tax breaks to U.S. manufacturers, especially in light of the 3 million factory jobs—one in six—that the country has lost in the past 3 1/2 years.

Other lawmakers, including House Ways and Means Chairman Bill Thomas, R-Calif., want to let U.S.-based companies with overseas factories share in the breaks.

A Thomas-backed bill that passed his committee last fall would have cost \$60 billion over 10 years and would have cut taxes not only for U.S. manufacturers but for many

corporations doing business overseas.

That measure is opposed by legislation being sponsored by many Democrats, including Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., and several Republicans including Reps. Philip Crane and Donald Manzullo. Their bill would limit the future tax breaks to U.S. manufacturing operations.

Complicating the matter, a bill being supported by the Republican chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa, is closer to the Rangel approach than to Thomas's proposal.

And two other key Republicans have called for an across-the-board cut on the corporate tax rate for all companies rather

Pfizer to end tests of Viagra for women

NEWYORK (AP)—Pfizer Inc. is ending research on whether the anti-impotency drug Viagra can be used to treat female sexual problems because studies on women were inconclusive, the company said.

The results of several clinical studies involving about 3,000 women did not support a regulatory filing, Pfizer said Friday.

Karen Katen, executive vice president of Pfizer and president of Pfizer Global Pharmaceuticals, said that while the company was disappointed that the program was not more successful, "this is the nature of drug development."

"We make substantial financial investments, marshal the talents of our best scientists and clinicians, and spend years studying potential treatments only to find that they do not meet the requirements for regulatory approval," Katen said.

Experts agree that female sexuality is more complex than male sexuality, involving psychological and physical factors.

Joe Feczko, president of Worldwide Developing at Pfizer, said diagnosing sexual difficulties in women "involves assessing physical, emotional and relationship factors, and these complex and interdependent factors make measuring a medicine's effect very difficult."

At least 10 pharmaceutical companies have sought to develop a female equivalent for Viagra since the drug was launched in 1998 as a treatment for male sexual dysfunction. More than 23 million men have been prescribed Viagra since then, Pfizer said.

Pfizer said it began researching into whether Viagra would work for women in 1996 and is studying other treatment approaches.

Greenspan: Protect intellectual property

WASHINGTON (AP)—Just as property rights protected an American economy largely based on farming at the start of 20th century, the protection of intellectual property is increasingly important at the start of this century, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said Friday.

Greenspan said that intellectual property—patents, copyrights and trademarks—have become increasingly important in recent decades as America's economic output has shifted.

America's gross domestic product is now influenced more and more not by the production of physical materials but by the creation of ideas.

"Only in recent decades, as the economic product of the United States has become so predominantly conceptual, have issues related to the protection of intellectual property rights come to be seen as significant sources of legal and business uncertainty," Greenspan said.

His comments were in remarks to a conference at the Stanford Institute for Economic

Policy Research in Stanford, Calif. Copies of the speech were released in Washington.

During the question period, Greenspan was not asked about comments he made in Washington this week that the country would



Greenspan

not be able to afford all the benefits promised to future Social Security retirees, given the looming retirement of the baby boom generation and the government's serious budget deficits.

But he was asked about another controversial issue, whether moving service jobs overseas, a process known as outsourcing, was good for the economy.

"There are certain audiences in which questions like that don't require answers," Greenspan said to laughter from the group composed of economists who are generally big supporters of free trade.

Greenspan also said that it was possible that the country was on the verge of getting increased growth in jobs, something that has been lagging in the current recovery, as businesses exhaust their ability to produce more through gains in productivity.



Analysts question Oracle's persistence

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Oracle Corp.'s decision to challenge a government lawsuit blocking its \$9.4 billion bid for rival PeopleSoft Inc. raises a question: Has Oracle CEO Larry Ellison turned the takeover quest into a Moby Dick-like obsession that might hurt his company?

Oracle says it's doing the sensible thing, protecting free market principles against a misguided antitrust lawsuit filed by the U.S. Justice Department and seven states. "We think we have a strong case," said Daniel Wall, a San Francisco attorney hired by the business software maker to fight the government's suit.

What's more, Oracle says everyone from shareholders to software customers will be better off it acquires Pleasanton-based PeopleSoft.

But more industry analysts are starting to believe Redwood Shores-based Oracle would be better off dropping the bid and

setting its sights on other acquisition candidates.

Oracle's continued pursuit of PeopleSoft didn't seem to impress investors Friday. The company's shares fell 41 cents, or 3 percent, to close at \$12.87 on the Nasdaq Stock Market, where PeopleSoft's shares declined 20 cents, or 1 percent, to \$21.58.

The PeopleSoft offer, launched nearly nine months ago, has outlived its usefulness, said Forrester Research analyst Erin Kinikin. "The bid served a purpose by disrupting PeopleSoft's business for many months, but the threat (of a takeover) is just about gone. It's like the threat level was at orange for a long time and now it's fading to gray."

As Oracle has stalked its prey, Ellison has periodically taunted PeopleSoft CEO Craig Conway, a former subordinate who has derisively compared his former boss to Genghis Khan. Ellison has cited this Genghis

Khan quote as one of his favorite sayings: "It's not sufficient that I succeed. Everyone must fail."

The acerbic exchanges between the two executives has made the takeover bid seem highly personal. "There are some very big egos involved," said analyst David Hilal of Friedman, Billings, Ramsey & Co.

cosmos +blue

If you depend on a 401(k), start worrying about your retirement

By ALBERT B. CRENSHAW
THE WASHINGTON POST

If the 401(k) retirement-savings system ever wants a mascot and a slogan, it need look no further than Mad magazine's Alfred E. Neuman and his signature line, "What, me worry?"

Millions of Americans now are depending on their 401(k) accounts, along with Social Security, to see them through their golden years. And, according to a new survey by benefits consultant Hewitt Associates, nearly three-quarters—72 percent—expect to have the same standard of living in retirement that they have had while working.

At the same time, more than half—52 percent—admit they haven't done as well as they should have in managing their k-plan accounts, but they seem to expect things to work out okay just the same.

"The most notable finding" in the survey, which covered 3,500 employees of large companies, "was the disconnect between what people are feeling today and what they expect the

future to look like," said Lori Lucas, an expert with Hewitt on the behavior of retirement plan participants.

The study found that a basic lack of money, as well as a lack of financial expertise and/or advice, were the key barriers to better participation by workers, and Hewitt is suggesting that employers revamp offerings to make their 401(k) plans more affordable and less intimidating to employees. Providing options that automatically make recommended investment changes—such as boosting contributions over time and rebalancing holdings—could help ease workers' problems, Hewitt's experts think.

As of today, though, the study found that 49 percent of workers don't think they are saving enough, and 18 percent don't know whether they are or not. On average these workers were contributing 5 percent to 6 percent of pay to their plans.

About 27 percent of workers said they felt they were saving about the right amount. This group, on average,

was contributing about 8 percent.

However, Hewitt noted, most economists say that, as a rule of thumb, workers should save 10 to 15 percent of pay to have an adequate retirement nest egg.

So why aren't employees saving more? In the Hewitt survey, just over half said "other financial obligations" were the No. 1 reason. In other words, they don't feel they have the money.

Lucas said the median annual income of those in the survey who said day-to-day needs were crowding out their saving was \$38,600. By contrast, the income of those who didn't feel so strapped was \$58,400. The lower savers "are definitely earning less money, but that's not poverty level," so "for many the issue is less that they can't afford more than it is that they need help in finding that money, in budgeting."

Squeezing \$4,000 to \$5,000 out of a \$38,600 income is more than cutting out the morning latte, though, so Hewitt has some suggestions for employers who want to help workers

get more from their k-plans (short of raising their pay, of course).

For example, an employer can put its plan on "autopilot." That means allowing workers to get in at a low "starter" contribution rate and then, if they wish, have that rate rise automatically over time. Similarly, the plan could offer a "pre-mixed" investment portfolio that would rebalance automatically, thus sparing workers decisions that many find daunting.

Such features take many of the toughest decisions out of the employee's hands, a particular aid to the financially unsophisticated.

An employer could also offer retirement-forecasting software, so that workers can figure out how well or badly they are doing, and possibly adjust their contributions.

"Also," Hewitt said, employers "can use existing communication channels to reinforce the notion that retirement savings is a shared responsibility—and that it's up to the employee to do his or her part by taking advantage of the 401(k) plan."

Two die in protests during Venezuela summit

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—President Hugo Chavez threatened Saturday to turn tanks against the capital's opposition-controlled police force, which he said did nothing to stop marchers from clashing with the National Guard during a two-day summit of developing nations.

Chavez accused his political opponents of "seeking blood" by marching on the summit, where leaders of poorer countries demanded that industrialized nations dismantle protectionist trade barriers.

"If I have to turn tanks on the city police, I will do it," Chavez said as the summit of the Group of 15 concluded Saturday. "I am not going to allow the police to turn into a subversive force."



One person died and at least 41 were hurt when opposition marchers clashed Friday with National Guardsmen providing security for the summit. The Caracas police are controlled by Mayor Alfredo Pena, who is sided with the opposition.

After a brief calm, hundreds of government foes returned to the streets late Saturday.

Protesters blocked a central Caracas highway and several main avenues with burning tires and debris to demand a recall referendum on Chavez's rule. Opposition sympathizers waved Venezuelan flags and anti-Chavez banners.

The opposition has collected 3.4 million signatures in a petition to force the referendum on Chavez, who was elected in 1998 and re-elected in 2000 to a six-year term. Chavez claims the opposition used fraud to collect the signatures.

Chavez, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, Nigeria's Robert Mugabe and other leaders issued a summit declaration calling on the United States and Europe to drop agricultural subsidies to level the free trade playing field.

The group, which actually includes 19 countries, represents 2.2 billion people in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It called for an international fund similar to the International Monetary Fund that would be devoted exclusively to reducing poverty.

And they demanded foreign debt relief.

"We've paid it twice, and this debt is still there," Chavez said. "The debt will never be paid... and in Venezuela we've made our debt payments religiously."

He said billions of dollars Latin America spends servicing foreign debt could be better spent assisting the region's millions of poor.

Wall Street staggers to end of February

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street staggered through the month of February, unable to latch on to a direction amid a dearth of useful economic information. When the market is in the doldrums like this, expert investors try to find stocks and sectors with a likely upside—but the month's performance shows that can be a daunting task.

The Nasdaq composite index finished its sixth down week in a row Friday, and continual selling pressure held the Dow Jones industrial average and Standard & Poor's 500 to minimal gains for the month.

In such uncertain times, the relative stability of large-cap value stocks becomes more appealing, said Tim Hayes, global stock strategist at Ned Davis Research in Venice, Fla. In the sideways trading of recent weeks, the technology-dominated Nasdaq has proved more volatile than the other major indexes.

"It could be a little bit trickier in the next few months," Hayes said. "Right now, our work shows things are holding up really well, but we have seen some divergence appearing that shows tech underperforming. ... It's probably going to be choppy for a while."

It's not unusual for the market to pause in February, on the heels of the strong upward momentum typical of December and January. But now it's not clear whether the rally will continue or if stocks will shift lower.

Hayes and other analysts are closely watching the financial sector, which is poised to do well as long as interest rates remain low, and more defensive areas such as utilities and consumer staples. Health care, traditionally more of a growth sector, may also hold opportunities in a declining market.

Technical analyst John Roque,



Traders work at the stations on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2004.

senior vice president at investment brokerage Natexis Bleichroeder, said financials are "absolutely the most important market sector." With merger and acquisition activity on the rise, they're in a particularly good position.

"While financials seem stretched on the upside, there is no weakness yet that would suggest their trend is prepared to change," Roque said. "I also pay attention very closely to the performance of semiconductor stocks, because if they weaken, all of tech tends to follow. And they've not been good performers of late."

Although a shift away from techs and small-caps is likely, the longer-term outlook may not be so bad. A

near-term correction "would leave the market in a healthier situation for a rally in the second half of the year," Hayes said. "Then we'd be watching for some of the previous leaders to reassert themselves, like tech and cyclical, and even small-cap stocks."

The equity outlook for the year remains upbeat overall. Inflation is in check, interest rates remain at 45-year lows, bond yields are in a reasonable trading range and earnings growth and economic data have been largely favorable. A weak job market and rising debt levels are the most worrisome aspects.

Mutual fund flows are also up, indicating more people are raising their stakes in the market. Stocks are still a good investment, but analysts warn

that with share prices running high, few bargains remain.

"What you're seeing right now is the public starting to express its belief in the market again, and my comment is, where the heck were they 15 months ago?" said Bernie Schaeffer, chairman of Schaeffer's Investment Research. "If we put a top in the first half or first quarter of this year, it's going to catch a lot of people coming in right at the peak."

Schaeffer's advice to small investors is to avoid being 100 percent invested in equities, particularly in blue chip index funds, where he believes the risks are underappreciated. He also suggests maintaining a cash reserve, and perhaps some exposure to gold, "as disaster insurance."

Nation

Tanker explodes off Va.; at least 2 die

CHINCOTEAGUE, Va. (AP)—A tanker carrying industrial ethanol exploded and sank about 50 miles off the Virginia coast Saturday night, the Coast Guard said. At least two of the 27 crew members aboard were killed, and rescue crews were still searching for 19 others.

Six crew members rescued were in critical condition, said Lt. Chris Shaffer of Ocean City (Md.) Emergency Services.

The 570-foot tanker flying a Singapore flag made an emergency call just after 6 p.m., saying there had been an explosion on board, said Petty Officer Stacey Pardini of the Coast Guard Atlantic area in Portsmouth, Va.

The explosion occurred after a fire started on the deck of the ship, Shaffer said. He said 19 people remained missing as of 9:45 p.m.

Three helicopters, three Coast Guard boats and a C-130 plane were searching for survivors.

"When the rescue divers got on the scene the fuel tanker was on fire, sinking and there was people in the water," Shaffer said. He said the six people that the Coast Guard recovered were taken to Norfolk Sentara General Hospital were in critical condition.

Coast Guard repatriates 336 more Haitians



A U.S. Coast Guard ship stops the coastal freighter Margot off the coast of Miami Beach, Fla., on Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2004. The freighter had 22 Haitians on board.

MIAMI (AP)—More than 330 Haitians rescued at sea in separate operations were repatriated Saturday, bringing to 867 the number of Haitians returned in the past week to the strife-torn Caribbean nation, the Coast Guard said.

The 336 Haitians repatriated Saturday had been taken into custody in "the past couple of days," said Lazaro Guzman, a Coast Guard spokesman. He provided no further details.

The Coast Guard is patrolling the waters around Haiti with ships and aircraft, preparing for a possible mass migration to the United States as violence from a rebel uprising worsens.

President Bush has said he will stick to U.S. policy and return Haitian migrants caught at sea to their homeland.

Since Feb. 21, 867 migrants found near Haiti's coast have been repatriated.

Coast Guard officials have said the recent surge in Haitian migrants is not an indication of the sort of attempted mass migration that occurred under Haiti's military dictatorship between 1991 and 1994, when more than 65,000 Haitians were intercepted at sea by the Coast Guard. Most were sent home.

Haitian-American and Miami community activists have urged Bush to reconsider U.S. policy, warning that Haitians being returned to the violence in Haiti could be in danger of persecution.

More than 100 people have been killed in four weeks of violence in Haiti, where rebels are demanding that President Jean-Bertrand Aristide leave office.

NYC marchers blame US for Haiti violence

NEW YORK (AP)—Hundreds of supporters of Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide marched in New York on Saturday, demanding that the United States and France resist rebels' demands for his ouster.

"The call for the overthrow of Aristide, the democratically elected president of Haiti, by France, the former colonial power, is clearly

racist," said Johnnie Stevens of the International Action Center, a group in the coalition that organized the march.

At least 1,000 protesters marched in Brooklyn, carrying banners proclaiming "U.S. & France: Stop Supporting Subversion in Haiti" and "Election, Yes, Coup d'Etat, No."

Opponents of Aristide have overrun more than half the

small country in four weeks. More than 100 people have been killed, and the United States and France have called on Aristide to step down.

The Brooklyn demonstrators blamed the violence on outsiders.

"It is clear to us who know Haiti that this is not an uprising of the Haitian people against their government, but rather a

military operation by Haitian former soldiers and death squads with the support of shadowy sectors in the U.S. and Dominican governments," said Ray Laforest, a native of Haiti and member of the Brooklyn-based Haiti Support Network.

Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

Harvard plan targets low-income students

BOSTON (AP)—Harvard University is guaranteeing that households earning less than \$40,000 annually won't have to pay for their children's education at the school, which plans to reach out more to students from low and moderate-income families.

Through the initiative, announced Saturday, Harvard also will reduce the contributions expected of families earning between \$40,000 and \$60,000 and intensify its efforts to recruit talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It will set aside an additional \$2 million to cover the expanded financial aid commitment, increasing its annual undergraduate scholarship budget to just under \$80 million.

"We want to send the strongest possible message that Harvard is open to talented students from all economic backgrounds," university president Lawrence H. Summers said in the announcement.

"Too often, outstanding students from families of modest means do not believe that college is an option for them—much less an Ivy League university," Summers said.

"Our doors have long been open to talented students regardless of financial need, but many students simply do not know or believe this. We are determined to change both the perception and the reality," Summers said.

Summers was scheduled to address the American Council on Education's annual meeting in Miami on Sunday.

About 1,000 of Harvard's 6,600 undergraduates are expected to benefit from the new program.

Tuition and fees will not be absolutely free for students qualifying under the plan; they still will be asked to meet "self-help" requirements through scholarships, work-study and summer jobs. But families making less than \$40,000 will

no longer have to pay the current \$2,300 expected contribution, and families between \$40,000 and \$60,000 will see their contribution decrease by an average of \$1,250.

Terry Hartle, senior vice president of government and public affairs for the American Council on Education, said he expects competitive admissions colleges to follow suit.

"What we have here is the combination of a generous proposal and a university synonymous with high-quality higher education. That's what makes this such an important development," Hartle said.

Harvard said it will identify and visit high schools where students might not consider Harvard an option, and reach out to students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds to make them aware of its financial aid resources. For these students, Harvard said, it will waive application fees, pay for travel for campus visits

and make funds available for books, winter clothing, medical care and other extraordinary expenses.

This year, tuition, room, board and fees at Harvard cost \$37,928; two-thirds of students receive some form of financial aid. The university, based in Cambridge, said it awarded just under \$110 million in aid last year.

The university said its research showed that students from households with incomes below \$50,000 would have never considered Harvard had it not been for the encouragement of faculty or alumni, or receiving a recruiting letter. Many of those students said their families had an aversion to debt, and that they had difficulty meeting routine school expenses.

The announcement follows a trend of colleges with competitive admissions attempting to make themselves more financially accessible.

COSMOS
+BLUE
NEW

Calif. court refuses to stop gay weddings

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—In yet another setback to conservatives opposed to same-sex marriage, the California Supreme Court declined a request to immediately stop San Francisco from marrying gay couples and to nullify the weddings already performed.

Attorney General Bill Lockyer asked the justices Friday to intervene in the debate while they consider the legality of the marriages. More than 3,400 couples have tied the knot since San Francisco began issuing marriage licenses two weeks ago under the directive of Mayor Gavin Newsom.

Lockyer told the justices it was a matter for the courts, not the mayor, to decide. He did not take a position on whether same-sex marriages should be

deemed constitutional.

“The genius of our legal system is in the orderly way our laws can be changed, by the Legislature or by a vote of the people through the initiative process, to reflect current wisdom or societal values,” he wrote.

The justices told the city and a conservative group that also asked the court to block gay marriages to file new legal briefs by March 5.

Regardless of the order, the San Francisco-based court did not indicate whether it would decide the issue. The seven justices usually are reluctant to decide cases until they work their way up through the lower courts, which this case has not.

Also Friday, New York

Attorney General Eliot Spitzer refused a request for an injunction against gay weddings performed in the village of New Paltz, N.Y., noting that such a measure should be a last resort. He did not issue an opinion on whether the marriages were legal.

Twenty-five gay couples exchanged wedding vows Friday on the steps of the New Paltz village hall.

“What we’re witnessing in America today is the flowering of the largest civil rights movement the country’s had in a generation,” said New Paltz’ Green Party mayor, Jason West.

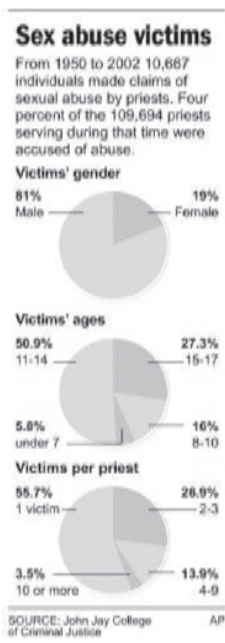
More than 30 gay couples in Iowa City, Iowa, were denied marriage licenses Friday by an openly lesbian county official who said she must uphold the law.

Bishops face decision on ‘zero tolerance’

The dismaying national reports on molesters among Roman Catholic clergy add a new layer of complexity for U.S. bishops as they look ahead to their next major decision in fighting sex abuse—whether to renew what’s known as their “zero tolerance” policy for abusers.

The bishops commissioned a study released Friday that found 4,392 priests were accused of abuse from 1950 to 2002, and plan to debate at their June meeting either keeping or revising the toughened abuse policy they adopted at the height of the crisis two years ago.

The chief matter is “zero tolerance,” the rule that priests guilty of even one abusive act with a mi-



nor must be permanently removed from active ministry and, in most instances, eventually dismissed from the clergy.

While pressure from the public and victims to keep the policy in place is intense, some in the church want changes. Priests and bishops have argued that kicking out abusers without rehabilitation is too harsh, and merely cuts an untreated abuser loose on society.

The survey conducted for a church watchdog panel by John Jay College of Criminal Justice makes things even trickier, because it found a steep drop-off in abuse cases in the 1990s, when bishops began crackdowns but before zero tolerance went into place. (AP)



Edwards hunts votes in select states

ATLANTA, Ga. (AP)—John Edwards hunted for votes Saturday in Super Tuesday states where he saw the best prospects for slowing John Kerry’s march to the nomination, portraying himself as the Democrat who can attract the most independents and swing voters.

“I am a good closer,” the North Carolina senator said, predicting a come-from-behind surge and shrugging off polls that show him behind in all 10 states choosing delegates Tuesday.

Kerry returned east after two days of campaigning in California and picked up the endorsements of former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo and his son, Andrew Cuomo, who was Housing secretary in the Clinton administration.

With three days to go before the biggest showdown of the primary season, Edwards made a conference call to former organizers for Howard Dean in 10 states to enlist their support.

Relative in custody over missing family

TAYLORSVILLE, Miss. (AP)—Investigators searching for a family of three who disappeared on Valentine’s Day detained one of their relatives Saturday and searched his property in southern Mississippi.

Earnest Lee Hargon, an adopted cousin of the missing family, was in custody and was being questioned, said Warren Strain, a state Highway Patrol spokesman.

Authorities also closed off a county road on both sides of Leaf River Veterinary Services as part of the investigation. The clinic is on Hargon’s property, and his wife works there as a veterinarian, Strain said.

The search area included the clinic, Earnest Hargon’s residence and the banks of the nearby Leaf River, Strain said. He said possible evidence was found but did not elaborate.

FDNY commissioner wants random drug tests

NEW YORK (AP)—A New York City firefighter was using cocaine before he crashed his truck into another fire truck headed to a blaze, the fire commissioner announced Saturday.

FDNY Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said he planned to talk with fire union officials about launching random drug testing of all uniformed firefighters, officers and emergency workers following the incident.

“Drug use is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated,” Scoppetta said. “This is a safety issue—for the public, and our own members.”

Steve Cassidy, president of the Uniformed Firefighters Association, said the union welcomes “the invitation to develop a fair system that protects the rights of our members.”

Cassidy also urged the department to provide better counseling for firefighters because, he said, many are exhibiting “post-traumatic stress behavior” from the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

ddcouncil
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Asia

US hunt for bin Laden gathers steam

By KATHERINE PFLEGER SHRADER
AP WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States is rounding up and questioning the relatives of fugitive al-Qaida leaders to generate information on the possible whereabouts of Osama bin Laden and his top deputies. This tactic helped lead to Saddam Hussein’s capture.

On Saturday, Pentagon and Pakistani officials denied an Iranian state radio report that bin Laden had been captured “a long time ago” in Pakistan’s

border region with Afghanistan.

But some U.S. officials do say they have been able to extract useful information from Afghan and Pakistani relatives and friends of al-Qaida fugitives, providing hints on the possible whereabouts of the organization’s leaders.

So far, the information the U.S. has received is unconfirmed and does not mean the terrorist leader’s location has been pinned down or his capture is imminent. U.S. officials

caution that rumors of significant progress are overstated.

With the weather improving in Afghanistan, the U.S. military has sent troops and technology to the country to aid the search and to give forces on the ground more opportunity to track down bin Laden. He is the United States’ most wanted terrorist for his leadership in planning the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Rounding up relatives for questioning helped bring about the Dec. 13 capture of Saddam, the former Iraqi leader. U.S. of-

ficials hope the tactic could lead to information on the whereabouts of bin Laden and his top deputies, especially when combined with information from spy satellites, communication intercepts and prisoner interrogations.

U.S. military officials have said they are planning a spring offensive in Afghanistan in the hopes of capturing bin Laden, former Taliban leader Mullah

Omar and their associates.

Meanwhile, American commanders in Afghanistan have expressed new optimism about finding bin Laden. Late last month, U.S. military spokesman Lt. Col. Bryan Hiltferty said the military believes it could seize bin Laden this year, perhaps within months.

Other U.S. officials try to temper such optimism.



bin Laden

In a sign of an increased focus on the Afghan-Pakistani border, Pakistani rapid reaction forces have been deployed to selected areas in the region, a mountainous landscape that runs 2,000 miles from the Himalayas in Pakistan’s northern territories to the desert of southwestern Baluchistan.

Pakistani officials told The Associated Press on Friday that satellite telephone intercepts from last year indicated al-Qaida members were hiding near the border.

US, N. Korea divided in wake of nuke talks

BEIJING (AP)—Six-nation talks on ending North Korea’s alleged nuclear weapons program made more progress than expected, a top U.S. delegate said Saturday as the meeting ended. Pyongyang said it would never give up its peaceful nuclear program.

The meeting ended with agreement to hold more negotiations before July and form a lower-level “working group” to handle details of the 16-month-old dispute. Both are steps toward establishing an enduring line of communication between the United States and the North, which have no diplomatic relations.

The communist North, however, gave no ground on U.S. demands that it completely give up its nuclear ambitions and insisted on keeping technology and equipment used to generate electricity, among other “peaceful purposes.”

“We don’t plan to include our civilian nuclear program, for peaceful purposes, in the freeze and dismantlement,” said the North’s chief delegate, Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan.

Korea has admitted producing a nuclear bomb, an allegation the North denies.

A senior U.S. official said he was upbeat after four days of talks and sometimes confusing signals but said the U.S. goal of a nuclear-free North Korea had not changed.

But the U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said: “I’m not aware of any peaceful nuclear programs in the DPRK, so this is an issue that will have to be dealt with over time.”

Participants said they expected a long process ahead over key contentious issues, including how deeply the North would be willing to cut its nuclear development. So far it is offering only to freeze and dismantle what it terms its “nuclear weapons program.”

The second round of talks, held six months after meetings in August made no progress, brought together the Koreas, the United States, Russia, China and Japan to hash out whether the Korean Peninsula can be made free of nuclear weapons.

Bomber killed inside mosque in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A suicide attacker blew himself up in a Shiite Muslim mosque in a city near Pakistan’s capital on Saturday, Pakistani officials told The Associated Press.

Army spokesman Gen. Shaukat Sultan said two people were injured in the blast, and the bomber was killed.

The explosives went off prematurely, and the bomber was still a distance from worshippers inside the Yadgar-e-Hussein mosque when the blast occurred, said Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed. The incident happened in Rawalpindi, a city adjacent to the capital, Islamabad.

Ahmed said the explosives did not appear to be very powerful. Television pictures showed

the bomber’s body amid broken glass in a hall at the mosque.

The attack occurred as Shiite Muslims were marking the holiday of Muharram. A separate prayer room at the mosque was packed with worshippers.

Ahmed told AP that the situation was “under control.”

Muharram is a month of mourning when Shiite Muslims recall the seventh-century death of Hussein, grandson of Islam’s prophet, Muhammad.

Most of Pakistan’s Sunni and Shiite Muslims live peacefully together, but small radical groups on both sides are responsible for frequent attacks. About 97 percent of Pakistan’s population is Muslim, and Sunnis outnumber Shiites by a ratio of about 8-to-2.

fun & games
flamingo
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Philippines seeks 180 lost in ferry fire

By JIM GOMEZ
AP WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Rescue crews waited for a smoldering ferry to cool down so divers could thoroughly search the craft Saturday as the number of missing rose to 180.

Fire raced through the Superferry 14 on Friday shortly after it left Manila for central and southern islands, killing one person and injuring 12 others. Witnesses reported a powerful explosion that sparked an inferno.

Officials had initially reported that 100 passengers were missing, but authorities raised that to 180 after a meeting with the ship's owner, WG&A, in which they realized some of the rescued had been counted twice, Coast guard chief Vice Adm. Arthur Gosangan said.

He said officials now have accounted for 565 of the 744 passengers and all but two of the 155 crew members. Most of the survivors jumped into the sea or boarded rescue boats.

"We are still hoping that they (the missing) are still out there ... and that they will come to us soon and tell us that 'we are here,'" WG&A spokeswoman Gina Virtusio said.

Officials said the missing might have been trapped inside the blazing ferry, or drowned in Manila Bay, and some could have been picked up by fishing boats. The still-smoldering ferry was towed to shallow water but was too dangerous to conduct a thorough search.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo said search efforts "will not be called off



The smoldering wreck of Super Ferry 14 lies on its side in shallow waters Saturday, Feb. 28, 2004, 70 kilometers southwest of Manila, Philippines.

AP

until all of them are accounted for."

"The authorities will get to the bottom of this incident ... and take steps to ensure it does not happen again," she said in a statement, urging stricter implementation of maritime laws.

Scuba divers so far have found

only one body after an initial inspection of the 10,192-ton ship.

Relatives of the missing waited outside Manila's coast guard headquarters to hear any news of their loved ones.

Police and fire investigators, meanwhile, were trying to determine

the cause of the fire.

There had been fears that the explosion may have been a terrorist attack linked to life sentences handed down Friday in Manila of two Muslim extremists for kidnapping an American in 2000. But Gosangan said bomb-

sniffing dogs checked the ship before it left Manila at 11 p.m. Thursday.

The fire broke out as the ferry, which was headed for the central and southern Philippines, neared Corregidor Island, about 45 miles southwest of Manila.

Pakistan kills 11 near Afghan border

WANA, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistani forces exchanged fire with gunmen in a minibus that did not stop at a road-block early Saturday, killing 11 people and injuring six, the army spokesman told The Associated Press.

The shooting, in a tribal region that has been a focus of anti-terrorist operations, occurred hours after armed men and soldiers exchanged fire at a military compound in the area.

Pakistani forces have been carrying out a sweep for terrorist suspects in the area, believed to be a possible hiding place for al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.

Pentagon and Pakistani officials denied a report by Iranian state radio Saturday that bin Laden was captured in the border region with Afghanistan "a

long time ago." Larry Di Rita, the chief Pentagon spokesman said: "I don't have any reason to think it's true."

Pakistan's Army spokesman Gen. Shaukat Sultan also said there was "no truth" to the story.

The minibus failed to stop at a road-block in Zeri Noor, a village just outside of Wana, the main town in tribal South Waziristan and the site of counterterrorism operations earlier this week, Sultan told The Associated Press. He said soldiers only shot at the bus after someone inside opened fire on them.

Sixteen people were arrested. The nationality of those killed was not immediately clear. Two boys were among the injured.

Allah Dad, a local resident, told AP the bus was filled mostly with Afghan

refugees on their way to the border. A taxi driving near the minibus was also hit, and the driver killed, Dad said. He said as many as 12 people were killed, and seven more injured in the incident.

"They opened fire when the bus didn't stop," Dad said. "There is a lot of tension in the area and a lot of troops. The roads to Afghanistan have been sealed."

Sultan said that troops had begun increasing their presence in Wana, 190 miles west of the capital, Islamabad, on Friday to provide additional security to stave off religious violence during the upcoming Muharram holiday. Muharram is the mourning month for Shiites, when they recall the seventh-century death of Hussein, grandson of Islam's prophet, Mohammed.

Over a million form human chain in Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—An estimated 1.2 million people linked hands in a human chain the length of the island Saturday as President Chen Shui-bian urged protesters to oppose China's military threats and create the "Great Wall of Taiwan's democracy."

The event was the biggest island-wide demonstration in Taiwan's history. The protesters hoped it would win the world's sympathy for Taiwan in its struggle against China. But it could end up further antagonizing the communist giant.

The people power display was also designed to give Chen a boost in the tight race ahead of the March 20 presidential election. Opposition par-

ties refused to join the human chain. They held rival events, including a blood drive and a torch relay.

Chinese leaders insist self-ruled Taiwan belongs to China, and they have repeatedly threatened to use force to take over the island, 100 miles off the mainland. China's massive military has nearly 500 short-range missiles pointed at Taiwan.

Kicking off Saturday's event in the western county of Miaoli, Chen told supporters, "Everyone should hold hands and protect Taiwan's national sovereignty, democratic development, economic prosperity and permanent peace in the Taiwan Strait."

As people in the human chain cheered,

Chen said, "I am very happy that together we can write history. This is the Great Wall of Taiwan's democracy."

Organizers said more than a million people formed the human chain that stretched 303 miles—from the northern port of Keelung down the flat western coast to Pingtung County near the island's southern tip. Local TV stations that covered the event from helicopters said the chain was complete.

In the capital, Taipei, people linked hands in front of the red brick Presidential Office. They raised their hands in the air, shouted "Taiwan Yes!" and released heart-shaped balloons into the air as cars passed by and honked their horns in support.

Japan faces anniversary of US nuke test

TOKYO (AP)—On the night of March 1, 1954, the No. 5 Fukuryu-maru was trolling for tuna off the Bikini atoll in the Pacific.

Suddenly, fisherman Matashichi Oishi saw the midnight sky flash orange and a rumbling shook the trawler. As he and 22 other crew members rushed to the deck, tiny white flakes began to fall on them like snow.

An underwater volcano, they thought. But it was something far more destructive: an American hydrogen bomb.

The No. 5 Fukuryu-maru, or Lucky Dragon, was about 100 miles off Bikini island in the central Pacific when the United States tested its bomb there, engulfing the fishermen in heavy radiation.

The bombing 50 years ago Monday provoked huge protests in Japan and reinforced the image of the Japanese—the target of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki attacks—as unique witnesses to the atomic age.

"We were the victims of the nuclear arms race," said Oishi, 70, who runs a laundry in Tokyo and recently published a book on the bombing. "The Bikini incident is not a problem of the past. It's an issue of nuclear weapons that affects all of us today."

For the fishermen exposed, the effects were devastating.

By the time the trawler returned home two weeks later, some crew members had lost hair, developed skin burns or had discolored faces. They suffered from diarrhea and jaundice, and their white blood counts dropped dangerously low.

The boat's radio telegraph operator, Aikichi Kuboyama, died in September 1954, aged 40.

Survivors have suffered from liver and blood disorders, including Oishi, who was operated on for liver cancer. In addition to Kuboyama, 11 crew members have died in the half-century since the exposure, at least six of them from liver cancer.

Fears at the time were high that such exposure was much more widespread. Between 1946 and 1958, the United States conducted 66 nuclear tests at Bikini as part of "Operation Crossroads." The atoll is part of the Marshall Islands, almost midway between Hawaii and Tokyo.

A Japanese government survey estimated about 850 other Japanese fishing boats were exposed to radiation, and some 160 fishermen eventually came forward to collect U.S.-paid compensation. Oishi's boat, however, was the only boat confirmed to have been there at the time of the explosion.

Most of the other boats are thought to have entered the affected area soon after the explosion. The survey did not measure any potential impact on foreign trawlers.

Officials knew of the testing program, but Oishi says fishermen were not well informed about where and when bombs would explode. No follow-up studies have been conducted on those other boats and nobody knows the total number of fishermen who might have been affected, says Kazuya Yasuda, curator of Tokyo's No. 5 Fukuryu-maru Exhibition Hall, where the boat is now on display.

World

Top rebel delays attack on Haiti’s capital

By PAISLEY DODDS and IAN JAMES
AP WRITERS

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Pro-government mobs that were looting and shooting up the Haitian capital withdrew from the streets Saturday, obeying an plea from President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. A rebel leader said he would honor a U.S. appeal not to attack.

Though violence subsided, doctors said the morgue at Port-au-Prince’s only hospital was full, and that 25-30 bodies were brought in since Friday—raising the death toll to more than 100 in Haiti’s four-week rebellion. The United States urged both sides in the conflict to end the violence, which broke out Feb. 5. In a statement late Saturday, the White House called on Aristide to “re-examine his position,” but did not call for his resignation. The statement was critical of looting and other violence it attributed to Aristide supporters and reiterated that the United States is prepared to support multilateral efforts to restore order. Rebel leader Guy Philippe, speaking to The Associated Press from a key northern city in his control, said his fighters would not attack the capital “for a day or two.” Airlines including Air France, American Airlines and Air Jamaica have canceled flights to and from Haiti. There are an estimated 20,000 foreigners in the country. Underscoring the growing panic, 200 people sought places on a nine-seat plane headed to the Dominican Republic. France, Brazil, Canada and the United States sent military planes with soldiers Saturday to evacuate their citizens. U.S. Coast Guard cutters, meanwhile, intercepted Haitians who fled on boats. Some 350 Haitians who were brought back under the guard of U.S. Marines walked off the dock into a crowd of government supporters who chanted “Aristide, Aristide, Aristide.” Aristide, Haiti’s first democratically elected president, held fast in his refusal to leave office until his term expires in February 2006—defying calls from the United States and France to step down. “Will I resign? No, I will not resign,” he said. “I will fulfill my turn and I will not allow criminals and terrorists to take over.” Aristide went on television Friday night to call for calm and end of the violence, saying “looting is bad.” Earlier Saturday, there was looting at the capital’s seaport, with people hacking into about 500 containers of U.S. aid and carrying away sacks of lentils. Food prices have multiplied in the capital since the popular uprising began in the northern city of Gonaives and rebels swiftly cut off supplies from key agricultural Artibonite district.

Iraq misses deadline for own constitution

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Iraq’s U.S.-picked leaders failed to meet a Saturday deadline for adopting an interim constitution, but were expected to find compromise soon on contentious issues including the role of Islamic law and the status of women. Still, the delay indicated the deep divisions over how to distribute power among the country’s ethnic and religious factions and to balance Islam and secularism. It was also the latest glitch in U.S. plans to hand sovereignty to Iraqis on June 30. Earlier Saturday, the top U.S. administrator in Iraq, L. Paul Bremer, met with members of the Governing Council in an attempt to overcome differences, one day after Shiite council members stormed out of talks after a dispute over Islamic law and women’s rights. “There are serious problems,” said Mouwafak al-Rubaie, a Shiite member of Iraq’s Governing Council. But, he added, “we started to learn a new trade that’s called compromise.” In a show of unity, Al-Rubaie spoke at a press conference Saturday evening alongside a Sunni and a Kurd from the council. Al-Rubaie said all 25 council members participated in Saturday’s meetings. The Sunni, Samir Shaker Mahmoud, said Saturday’s talks were “in a spirit of positive dialogue. We are all optimistic that this historic opportunity will be seized and our task completed.” Throughout the day, Bremer and other U.S. officials were on hand as council members broke off into small groups to deal one by one with the draft’s roughly 60 clauses. “They are trying to deal with the more contentious issues last,” a senior coalition official said on condition of anonymity. He suggested the issue of Islam’s role was one of the toughest. “That’s going to have to go to the entire group,” he said. “That’s not going to be resolved in a subgroup.”

African leaders sign common security plan

SIRTE, Libya (AP)—African leaders signed a sweeping defense and security agreement Saturday that allows the fledgling African Union to send forces to intervene in civil wars, international conflicts and coup attempts across the continent. Also, Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi said his country decided to dismantle its atomic program to avoid the dangers it might bring. “The nuclear arms race is a crazy and destructive policy for economy and life,” Gadhafi said at the closing session of the African Union summit. “Any national state that will adopt these policies cannot protect herself, on the contrary it would expose itself to danger.” This was the first time Gadhafi publicly addressed Libya’s nuclear program since agreeing to eliminate its facilities in December. The defense and security agreement aims to prevent tragedies like the 1994 Rwandan genocide, in which more than 500,000 people were massacred while the African Union’s predecessor, the Organization of African Unity, did nothing. The 39-year-old OAU was disbanded in 2002 because it was so ineffective. But with funding short and the African Union already \$40 million in debt, the joint force is not likely to form soon, delegates said. A Zimbabwe official said it would not be ready before 2010.

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Israeli airstrike on car kills 3 in Gaza

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—An Israeli helicopter fired missiles at a car in a densely populated neighborhood of the Gaza Strip on Saturday, killing three Islamic militants and wounding 15 people, doctors said.

Three of the wounded were in critical condition after the airstrike between Gaza City and the Jebaliya refugee camp. The wounded included three children, one of whom was among those in critical condition, the doctors said.

The two missiles hit with a thunderous explosion. Palestinian security officials strained to keep order around the scene as surging crowds jumped on the wreckage and called for revenge.

Israel said the car carried senior Islamic Jihad militants who planned several attacks on Israelis. The military said it believed the men were transporting explosives in the car.

There has been speculation Israel will step up its strikes against militants before a possible withdrawal from much of the Gaza Strip in an effort to prevent militants from claiming that they drove out Israeli forces.

Two advisers to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon were leaving for Washington late Saturday to discuss his unilateral withdrawal plan with National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. Sharon has said he would



Palestinians chant slogans as they gather around a blown up car after it was hit by an Israeli helicopter strike at the Jabaliya refugee camp in Gaza City Saturday Feb. 28, 2004.

coordinate any pullback with the United States.

Islamic Jihad identified the three men killed in Saturday's strike as Mahmoud Judah, a

field commander of the group's military wing; militant Ayman Dahdouh; and Dahdouh's cousin, Amin, a group supporter but not a militant. Two

of the bodies were decapitated in the attack.

In a statement, Israel's military said the strike's main target, Judah, directed many attacks on

Israelis, including one in October when two gunmen killed three Israeli soldiers as they slept in their barracks in the Jewish settlement of Netzarim.

Experts predict acquittal of Milosevic

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)—When U.N. prosecutors opened their case against Slobodan Milosevic two years ago, they set out to get him convicted of genocide. The consensus today is, they failed.

Legal experts say prosecutors at the U.N. tribunal have assembled solid evidence on lesser charges against the former Yugoslav president. But acquittal on the genocide charge—the crime of all crimes, experts say—would have far-reaching implications.

Many Serbs would cheer it as vindicating their view that Serbia stands wrongly accused. Others likely will see it as a distortion of Europe's darkest chapter since World War II. And it may provide important lessons for those planning a trial for Saddam Hussein.



Milosevic

On Wednesday, after calling 296 witnesses, prosecutors abruptly rested their case earlier than planned, seeking to avoid further delays caused by Milosevic's illness, which has interrupted the trial nearly 20 times and cost it 65 days.

The trial, troubled from the start, suffered a further setback with the unexpected announcement Feb. 22 that presiding British judge Richard May, 65, is ill and will resign.

Whoever succeeds him will have to catch up on about 60,000 pages of documentary evidence and courtroom transcripts.

Milosevic's defense will open June 8. With or without a conviction in the 1995 genocide of Bosnian Muslims, he faces possible life imprisonment.

Milosevic faces 66 counts including war crimes, genocide and complicity in genocide in the 1992-1995 Bosnian war.

Pope: Same-sex unions will 'degrade' marriage

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope John Paul II urged authorities Saturday to stop approving gay marriages, saying they "degrade" the true sense of marriage between a man and a woman.

It was the second time in a week the pontiff has raised the issue, which is making headlines in the United States as gay couples marry in cities like San Francisco and New Paltz, N.Y.

The California Supreme Court on Friday also declined a request to immediately stop San Francisco from marrying gay couples and to nullify the weddings already performed. More than 3,400 gay couples have tied the knot in San Francisco.

John Paul said a family based on marriage between a man and a woman was a pillar of society that justly had rights and duties specific to it.

"This is a time in which there is no lack of attempts to reduce marriage to a mere individual contract, with characteristics very different from those that belong to marriage and the family, and that end up degrading it as if it were a form of accessory association within the social body," he said.

John Paul urged all public authorities, but particularly Catholic ones, to stop approving such laws, saying they should not contribute to legislation contrary to "the primary and essential norms that regulate moral life."

Authorities must instead protect laws that favor the family "knowing that they promote a social development that is just, stable and promising," he said.

The pope made the comments as the new ambassador of Argentina to the Holy See presented his credentials.

Shiite Muslims celebrate Ashoura holiday

KARBALA, Iraq (AP)—Boys dressed in black beat themselves with chains Saturday as part of the Shiite Muslim holiday of Ashoura, while soldiers tightened security in the holy city of Karbala before 1.5 million people arrive for the festival's culmination.

Police and Polish soldiers set up checkpoints across Karbala and all vehicles were banned

from the city center to protect against car bombings in the first Ashoura feast since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Ashoura, a 10-day festival, commemorates the death of the Shiite saint Imam Hussein, a grandson of the prophet Muhammad.

The celebration is a major event in the Shiite Muslim calendar. Hussein, killed in a power struggle in the 7th century, is

buried in a gold-domed shrine in Karbala.

Authorities fear extremists may attack during the celebrations to raise tensions between the country's Shiite majority and Sunni minority. Under Saddam's Sunni-dominated regime, Shiite celebrations were tightly controlled, and self-flagellation, a key element of the pilgrimage, was banned.

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Health & Fitness

Scientists study how to keep brain

By MALCOLM RITTER
AP SCIENCE WRITER

Why would a sleep-deprived brain fail to absorb conversations? Just how does it produce drowsiness while a person is driving? Indeed, how does it know it needs more sleep in the first place?

These aren't just esoteric ponderings. The answers to these and related mysteries about the sleepy brain could lead to improved drugs to help people fall asleep or stay awake. They could help drowsy people find the most effective time to drink coffee or take a nap.

Frank Knower knew something was wrong when he kept having conversations with co-workers and later couldn't remember a thing that was said. He couldn't even remember what he'd said.

Later, after he retired, he discovered another problem: He got irresistibly drowsy during long drives.

None of the usual stay-awake tricks like turning up the radio or rolling down the window could keep him awake. He had to pull over for naps.

These days, his wife handles a lot of the driving. And while the 74-year-old Knower can still nod off during the day at his home in Tappan, N.Y., treatment for his sleep-disrupting condition, apnea, and a daytime alertness pill help keep his problems in check.

For Knower, it's a story with a happy ending. For scientists, though, it's a story full of mystery.

Scientists may even find safe and reliable ways to skip slumber entirely for days without the usual mental glitches.

"You could have soldiers who could fight a war 24 hours a day and maybe not sleep, at least for a few days," said Dr. Clifford Saper of Harvard Medical School. "If you knew what was making the brain sleepy, you could get at it at a fundamental level ... I think once we learn how the system operates we'll be able to successfully manipulate it."

Of course, in an economy with such potentially perilous round-the-clock workplaces as trucks, airplanes, nuclear power plants and supertankers, even helping people sleep and function well one day at a time would be a benefit.

An estimated 70 million people in the United States suffer from sleep problems, either because of disorders such as apnea and insomnia or just a lack of time devoted to slumber,

the federal government says. At least 100,000 auto crashes and 1,550 traffic deaths a year are caused by falling asleep at the wheel.

And sleep deprivation leads to reduced productivity, poor performance in school or the workplace, and possibly medical problems like high blood pressure, heart disease, depression and reduced resistance to viruses.

"Sleep is as important to our overall health as exercise and a healthy diet," says Dr. Carl Hunt, director of the government's National Center on Sleep Disorders Research.

So how much sleep is enough? The typical recommendation is at least eight hours a night for adults. But in the February issue of the journal Sleep, an expert called on doctors to abandon that blanket prescription.

"It appears seven hours or even five or six is safe for people who aren't sleepy during the day," said Dr. Daniel Kripke of the School of Medicine of the University of California, San Diego.

Kripke cited large studies that tracked death rates in people who habitually slept different lengths of time. But "if someone is sleepy during the day with less than eight hours, as I am myself, then I think it might be wise to get eight hours sleep," he said.

Hunt said sleep studies overall indicate that adults

generally need seven to eight and you have trouble paying information," Stepanski said.



hours a night to be well-rested. "As you ratchet down from seven hours to six or five or four, there's a progressively greater price" in illness, accidents and mental malfunctioning, Hunt said.

Studies show people can sleep too little and still feel fine during the day, but that's because people stop realizing they're impaired if they sleep too little night after night, Hunt said. So while there probably are some people who truly function well on six hours a night, they can't just rely on how they feel, he said.

Teenagers need around 8.5 hours of sleep a night, and younger children should aim for about nine hours, he said.

When the brain runs on too little sleep, it malfunctions in a wide variety of areas:

- Your reaction time slows

sustained attention. Driving is "the worst kind of thing," especially in bumper-to-bumper situations or lonely roads, said Edward Stepanski of the Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. "You're forced to sit still, so you can't move around and do things people ordinarily do to keep awake, and you're staring at the road."

■ You have trouble keeping tabs on multiple sources of information. So you ignore some of them to focus on a few, and "you fail to notice that you're running out of gas," said David Dinges at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

■ Creativity suffers. You get stuck on bad solutions and can't think of better ones.

■ You can't remember as much, and "a sleepy brain is just not very good at learning new

■ Your brain just can't do some critical things in a hurry.

If given the luxury of time, it actually does pretty well with tasks like making decisions and solving complicated problems, says Hans Van Dongen at the University of Pennsylvania. That's because the brain has "an almost stunning ability to find tricks" to get around some hurdles imposed by sleep loss, he said.

So if you work late in your office answering e-mails without any reason to hurry, you'll probably do all right, though you might have to read some sentences a couple times, he said. But then, as you drive home, you have to react and make decisions—right away.

"And you find that, oops, you're still impaired, after all, even though you didn't notice it," Van Dongen said. "And now

you've got a problem."

Much of the overall problem in the sleepy brain is what scientists call microsleeps, repeated periods of a second or two, or maybe 10, when you just zone out and don't process information.

Microsleeps reflect "a kind of struggle inside the brain at the most fundamental biological level" between sleep and wakefulness, producing a sort of in-between state of reverie or inattentiveness, Dinges said. A person might look awake to a casual observer during microsleeps of a couple seconds, or the episodes can be more obvious.

Think of trying to stay awake at a meeting after partying all night. As Dinges observes in lab experiments, the eyeballs try to roll, the eyelids move unusually slowly and neck muscles start to go limp, which suggests that even muscle-control parts of the brain participate in sleepiness.

Work in Dinges' lab has shown that after a few nights of too little sleep, people stop realizing their daytime performance is suffering. So researchers are studying whether machines can do a better job of spotting sleep-deprived people.

Dinges said federal investigators are now seeing whether specialized monitors can track slowly closing eyelids in truckers. Studies suggest that's a reliable sign of impairment, he said.

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Life & Style

The goody-
bag:

Coppola film tops Independent Awards



Director Sofia Coppola accepts the best director award for her work on "Lost in Translation" from presenter Tom Cruise at the 2004 IFP Independent Spirit Awards In Santa Monica, Calif., on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2004.

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—"Lost in Translation," Sofia Coppola's quirky tale of friendship in Tokyo, dominated Saturday's Independent Spirit Awards, winning best picture and three other prizes.

Coppola won directing and screenplay honors and her star, Bill Murray, was named best actor for his role as a has-been movie star shooting whiskey ads in Japan.

Charlize Theron won the best-actress award for playing serial killer Aileen Wuornos in "Monster," which also received the best first feature prize for director Patty Jenkins.

The supporting-actor honor went to Djimon Hounsou as an artist dy-

ing of AIDS in "In America," while Shohreh Aghdashloo was named best supporting actress as a compassionate Iranian immigrant in "House of Sand and Fog."

The Spirit Awards honor independent films at least partly financed outside the Hollywood studio system. The 9,000 actors, directors, writers and other industry professionals who belong to the nonprofit Independent Feature Project/Los Angeles vote on the winners.

All four acting winners are competing in their respective categories at Sunday's Academy Awards, with Theron considered the front-runner for the lead-actress Oscar. "Lost in

Translation" is up for best picture, while Coppola has Oscar nominations for directing and original screenplay.

Nominees for the Oscars and Spirit Awards usually do not correspond to such a degree. Among last year's Spirit Awards acting nominees, only one—best-actress winner Julianne Moore of "Far From Heaven"—also was nominated for an Oscar.

Other Spirit Award winners:

- Best film shot for under \$500,000: "The Station Agent."
- Best debut performance: Nikki Reed, "thirteen."
- Best first screenplay: Thomas McCarthy, "The Station Agent."
- Best foreign film: "Whale Rider."

J.Lo, Affleck dominate worst-film awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The honeymoon's over for Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez, but their mob-comedy flop "Gigli" really cleaned up Saturday at the Razzies, the first movie to take all six top trophies in the annual dishonorable-mention awards.

Golden Raspberry Awards voters picked "Gigli" as 2003's worst picture, Affleck as worst actor, Lopez as worst actress and the two as worst screen couple. "Gigli" filmmaker Martin Brest also took the Razzies for worst director and screenplay.

"Gigli" hit theaters last summer amid the tabloid frenzy over Affleck and Lopez's on-again, off-again wedding plans. They finally announced in January the romance was off.

The movie, which starred Affleck as a thug smitten by Lopez as a lesbian crime colleague, fell short of the record seven Razzies won by "Show-girls" and "Battlefield Earth."

"But those are much better bad movies, if that makes any sense," said Razzies founder

John Wilson. "If you sit through them with the right people or the right brand of liquor, they can be strangely entertaining."

"But I don't care how medicated you are or what people you're watching it with, 'Gigli' is just a pain in the posterior. It's one of those things that is, as opposed to enjoyably embarrassing, it's just skin-crawlingly embarrassing."

"Gigli" cost \$54 million to make but earned back just \$6 million.

Among other "winners," Sylvester Stallone padded his Razzie resume with a record 10th prize, this time for worst supporting actor in "Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over." Stallone's past Razzies include one for worst actor of the 20th century.

Demi Moore took the supporting-actress Razzie for her comeback role in "Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle," which also was named worst remake or sequel.

"She tried to come back, and we said, 'No, thanks. We chased you away before. Go away again,'" Wilson said.

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Sofia Coppola looks to make Oscar history

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Sofia Coppola, nominated in three categories, seeks to be the first American woman ever to win the Academy Award for best director at Sunday's ceremony. When Coppola was growing up, creativity was practically a household chore.

"All the kids were encouraged by my wife and myself to have artistic interests. We had summer creativity camp in which they would all do one-act plays or do various projects and endeavors," her father, Francis Ford Coppola, the Oscar-winning director of "The Godfather" films, told The Associated Press.

Sofia once worried that she dabbled too much. She liked photography, designing clothes, painting, writing. She even overcame her intense camera shyness to try acting in "The Godfather: Part III"—not that her uneasiness wasn't obvious.

But a few years ago all her passions coalesced and she joined the family business as a filmmaker.

She now has a handful of Oscar nominations for "Lost in Translation," her sophomore feature-film effort, with bids for best director (making her the first American woman nominated in the category, and only the third ever) best picture and best original screenplay. Star Bill Murray is a contender for lead actor.

The 32-year-old with the crooked smile and withdrawn mannerisms has a vastly different behind-the-camera style than her father, more intimate and comedic and less epic and moody, but still credits him with inspiring her.

"Being around him, seeing him working—it looked like fun, it looked

exciting," Coppola, who traveled the world with her family to exotic locations for "Apocalypse Now" and "The Godfather" films, told AP a few weeks before the Oscars. "I can't imagine anything more interesting than making a movie. ... But it's pretty overwhelming because I wasn't expecting any of this."

With "this," she gestures to a crowd of friends, supporters and admirers at a party in the ritzy Los Angeles sushi restaurant Koi to celebrate the DVD release of "Lost in Translation."

Coppola squirms a lot, and seems uncomfortable with attention. "I'm trying to enjoy this whole part of it and then take this part of it in," she says during this awkward phase of the night. "Then I want to get back to writing."

But later, when the strangers dissipate and she's left with mostly family and friends, her shyness fades and she steps onto a small stage to sing a karaoke version of the Red Hot Chili Peppers' "Give it Away."

In person, Sofia Coppola is as polite, pensive and unpolished as the lonely American played by Scarlett Johansson in "Lost in Translation," who strikes up a reluctantly platonic romance with an older fellow stranger—the aging, dejected actor played by Murray.

There are other similarities to her real life: many say the flashy photographer who is married to Johansson's unhappy character bears a resemblance to Coppola's soon-to-be ex-husband, Spike Jonze—the director of "Adaptation" and "Being John Malkovich." They were married for four years, but filed for divorce about three months ago.

Man of wife's dreams outgrows her fantasy

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: Seven years ago, I met the man of my dreams and was lucky enough to marry him. "Mike" is intelligent, caring, loving, witty, romantic and a great father. Every day he tells me he loves me and that I'm beautiful.

So what's the problem? Mike weighs 80 pounds more than he did when we met. I thank God for him every single day, but the "zing" is gone.

Don't get me wrong. We're still intimate, but I miss the "butterflies" I used to feel just looking at him. I am also worried about his health and the effect his eating habits have on our children. This has seriously damaged his self-esteem, too, and that is the hardest thing for me to deal with.

If life gets in the way, and intimacy goes by the wayside for a couple of weeks, Mike accuses me of purposely avoiding him, looking for someone new, never taking the initiative, etc. Abby, I love my husband. I've done everything I can to help him with his weight problem—to no avail. In fact, if I mention it, he tells me saying something only makes it worse.

I take good care of my own health and try to teach the kids to do the same, even when they ask why Dad doesn't take care of his.

Am I being petty when I tell you I'd give anything to have my slimmer, sexier, healthier husband back? I miss his energy and confidence and the respect I had for him. Abby, are my feelings valid? Or should I just get over it and be happy with all of his good qualities?

FEELING WEIGHTED DOWN

DEAR WEIGHTED DOWN: You are not being petty. You are being human. Ask your husband to make an appointment with his doctor for a complete physical or make the call for him. The lecture about diet and health should come from the doctor. Your husband is not alone in his problem. It's one that is shared by millions of people in this country.

The solution lies in a willingness to make lifestyle changes. Since you are already providing healthy meals at home, please consider a physical activity you and your husband can enjoy together to help him burn those extra calories. (If he's reluctant, remind him that it will put him in better shape for lovemaking.) Reward any progress with compliments and praise. If all else fails, make sure his life insurance is up-to-date and enjoy him as long as you can. Nobody's perfect.

DEAR ABBY: In our office we often send cards and gifts as a group to anyone who has a birthday, new baby, etc. Usually everyone signs the cards. We are a big department, so there are a lot of names.

What is the etiquette on group sympathy cards? Should everyone sign it, or is that too flippant? Should it read, "Your friends in the department"?

CURIOUS ABOUT ETIQUETTE

DEAR CURIOUS: Either one is proper—however, for each person to sign it would be much warmer and more personal.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married just over a year, and we are not ready to have children for another year or so.

How can I get the message across to well-meaning family and friends that it is none of their business when we are planning to have children? I have endured enough personal questions. I would love to hear your advice.

NOT READY FOR CHILDREN

DEAR NOT READY: Here it is. Say with a smile, "Thank you for your interest, but we're waiting to see if the marriage works out."

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



Dear Abby

Costner defends Gibson's 'Passion'

NEW YORK (AP)—Kevin Costner said people "shouldn't be attacking" Mel Gibson for "The Passion of the Christ," in an interview on the syndicated entertainment TV show "Access Hollywood."

"We shouldn't be attacking a filmmaker like Mel Gibson who, number one, is an honorable filmmaker ... and probably questioned himself more than anybody even knows. So, like leave him alone," the 49-year-old director-actor said.

The film, starring Jim Caviezel as Jesus, is a bloody depiction of Christ's final hours and crucifixion.

Some Christian and Jewish leaders have complained the movie could fuel anti-Semitism by implying Jews were collectively responsible for Christ's death.

Actor Kevin Costner answers a question at a news conference in this Aug. 9, 2003 file photo, in Sheboygan, Wis.

AP



PASSAGES

Historian Daniel J. Boorstin, 89

WASHINGTON (AP)—Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Daniel J. Boorstin, who wrote more than 20 history books over his long career, died Saturday. He was 89.

Boorstin died after midnight of pneumonia at Washington's Sibley Hospital, his wife, Ruth, said.

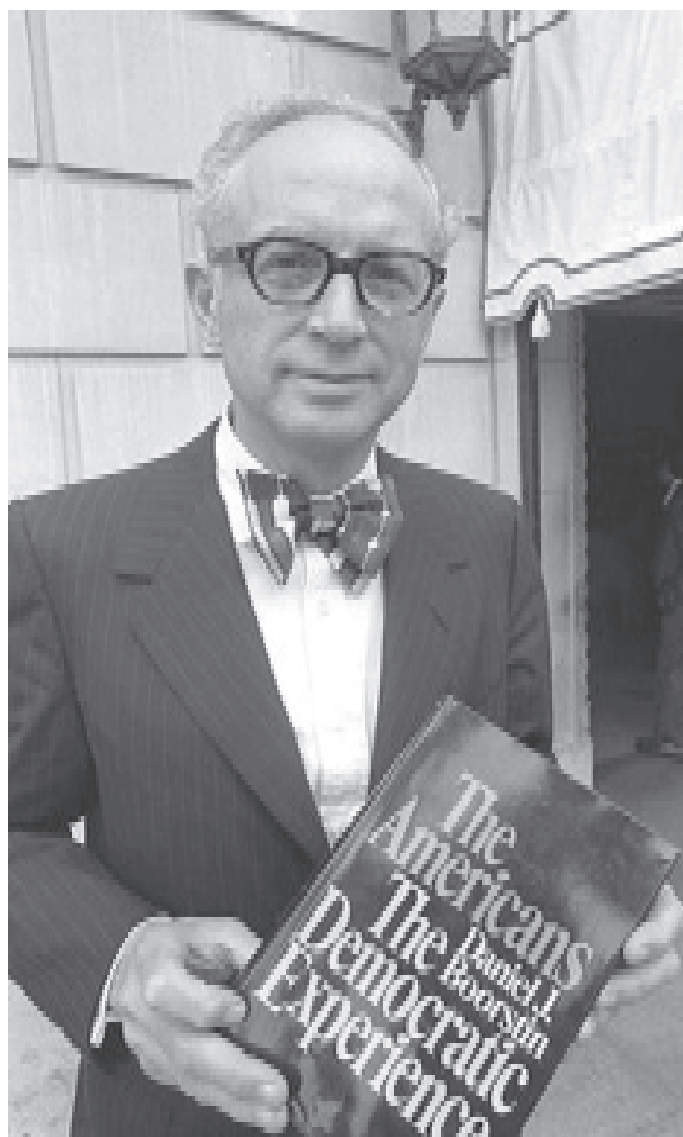
Renowned for his books, Boorstin was appointed librarian of Congress in 1974 by President Ford and spent 12 years as director of the world's largest library.

It was also in 1974 that he won the Pulitzer for history for "The Americans: The Democratic Experience." The book was the third in Boorstin's "The Americans" trilogy and followed "The Colonial Experience" and "The National Experience." All sought to analyze the distinctive character of American institutions and culture.

Boorstin tackled world history with "The Discoverers," which looked at the human search for knowledge. That was perhaps the book he was most fond of, his wife said.

Boorstin's successor at the Library of Congress, James H. Billington, remembered Boorstin as a great historian and scholar. "This is a remarkable American of our times. He was an extraordinary historian, first and foremost of American historians. He was a polymath," he said.

Boorstin was born in Atlanta, reared in Tulsa, Okla., and educated at Harvard, Yale and Oxford universities. Before his appointment to the Library of Congress, he was director of



AP

Daniel J. Boorstin poses with the book in Los Angeles with which he won the Pulitzer Prize for History, in this May 1974 file photo.

the National Museum of History and Technology, senior historian of the Smithsonian Institution and a history professor at the University of Chicago for 25 years.

His wife of more than 60 years, Ruth, collaborated with Boorstin on his books. After he punched out his

manuscript on his manual typewriter, the copy went straight to Ruth for her input.

She also noted that her husband had 50 honorary degrees, and, with a chuckle, she added: "And that meant I sat through 50 commencements."

Poll: 'Rings' favored for top Oscar

The movie most people think should win the Academy Award for best picture is the third chapter of the "Lord of the Rings" saga, a poll found.

Asked which movie should win the academy award for best picture, 42 percent picked "Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King," widely expected to win the award Sunday night.

"Seabiscuit" got the support of 16 percent and "Mystic River" was picked by 11 percent. Both "Lost in Translation" and "Master and Commander" finished in single digits in the ABC News poll.

In previous ABC polls over the last few years, there was no clear favorite with the public like there is this year.

In March 2002, "Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" was essentially tied with "A Beautiful Mind" as public favorites in a year when "A Beautiful Mind" won the Oscar for best picture.

In March 2001, "Erin Brockovich" and "Gladiator" were the public favorites and "Gladiator" was the Oscar winner for best picture.

The poll of 1,028 adults was taken Feb. 18-22 and has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. (AP)

Kerry: Stations have right to pull Stern

NEW YORK (AP)—Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry said radio stations are within their right to pull Howard Stern off the air if they object to the shock jock's racy show.

"Howard Stern does have the right to say whatever he wants anywhere, but he doesn't necessarily have the right to say it on that station if the people who run the station don't want him to," Kerry said while campaigning in New York, where Stern's show is broadcast.

A questioner at the town hall meeting in Brooklyn asked Kerry to stand up for Stern's right to say what he wants because the Republican-led government is repressing his right to free speech.

Kerry said he disagrees that Stern faces repression.

"If you are working for somebody and they have a set of rules, that's the deal," Kerry said. "And it doesn't mean he can't go out and say it somewhere if somebody else wants to have him say that."

Clear Channel Communications this week yanked Stern off stations in San Diego, Pittsburgh, Rochester, N.Y., Louisville, Ky., and Fort Lauderdale and Orlando, Fla. Clear Channel said the suspension would last until the Stern show met its programming guidelines.

Pastimes

WONDERWORD
By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SLIPPERY WHEN WET Solutions: 6 letters

SYREHTILSDEWJPB
ESAERGIMNREGNAD
RSALTQNUMARDNVM
OOLRUROITIFAAS
OLAIGRAHTNNRAMP
FGDDGTECOAE EEP
OMD①SRLITLOANNA
OLEO①ITBEIRCYTI
TIRPM①SALEOTIUN
IFIAD①LDUFNCMT
NRTNAESAIANRIBC
GEOKNLVNRDEDNLS
SCETIELCOAELEEP
RDESKATEMWEASRO
TLOOSEDEWINESST

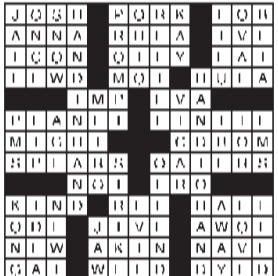
© 2001 Universal Press Syndicate www.wonderword.com 2/23
Banana, Blunder, Clean, Climate, Coating, Condition, Crafty, Cream, Dango, Danger, Dawiness, Evade, Film, Fooling, Free, Frost, Glossy, Grass, Grease, Grip, Ground, Iciness, Imminent, Jam, Ladder, Liquid, Loose, Paint, Pavement, Peel, Ramp, Release, Roads, Roof, Salt, Silt, Skate, Skin, Slide, Slither, Smeared, Snow, Soaked, Spot, Traction, Tumble, Weather, Well.
Last Saturday's Answer: Nurture
NOTE: Please send the change new charge to the Collect Wonderword. Add \$1 for the first book order. \$1 more for each additional copy. Volume 17 #18 \$5.95 each. Universal Press Syndicate Send to: WONDERWORD, 4925 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or 20104444, 1-800-255-6234, ext. 4610.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Needle case
5 Turf
8 "The Georgia Peach"
12 Utter destruction
14 Wheel-base
15 Gilbert & Sullivan's ship
16 Broadway brightener
17 Airborne Dracula
18 Strut about
20 Leading man in the theater?
23 Action
24 Earth
25 "Tommy" contest
28 Wiedersehen precursor
29 Composer Thomas, et al.
30 Lummax
32 Nitwit
34 Crazy
35 Apiece

DOWN
1 Napoleon's title (Abbr.)
2 Mai —
3 Ensigns' org.
11 Part of N B
13 Somewhere out there
19 CSA soldiers
20 Dos Passos trilogy
36 Church array
37 Two-way or Boleyn
39 Silents address Naldi
40 local, as a fracture
43 Itago
44 Corrode
45 Greek vowel
46 "The Amazing Race" segment

Solution time: 24 mins.




Saturday's answer 2-23

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY
Howard Jones, Patricia Richardson, Johnny Winter, Peter Fonda

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: You will have the discipline, desire and the determination to make things happen this year. It will require organization, but your unusual approach to everything you do will drum up the support required to push forward. Your numbers are 11, 16, 20, 25, 34, 43

EUGENIA LAST
THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY



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MAKE A WISH
A TV special featuring the voices of the children who make a wish.
Directed by: [illegible]
Produced by: [illegible]
Screenplay by: [illegible]
Music by: [illegible]
Casting by: [illegible]
Costume Designer: [illegible]
Hair and Makeup: [illegible]
Production Office: [illegible]
Special Thanks to: [illegible]

Ziggy®

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NURSE!
BRING THIS MAN A PLACEBO STAT!



#123 TOWN OF BOSTON FROM MAIL

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5951. 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
Do a little extra research to get to the bottom of what's really going on today. It's up to you to make whatever adjustments are necessary. Don't get angry—get energetic. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Give extra attention to your home and the improvements you can make. Being affectionate toward your family will bring good results and the help you need to tidy up. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Romance is in the picture today, so spend some time with the person who interests you the most. Agreements can be made, but get everything in writing to avoid problems in the future. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
Curb your mood swings before they lead to trouble. No one will want to listen to you nag, so vow to be positive — and, in return, get positive results. ★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
Nothing can stop you once you set your course. Make whatever calls are crucial to getting what you want. Expanded interests equal greater possibilities. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
The more you do to compensate any negatives in your life, the better it will be for you in the future. Money may be tight if you haven't already set a strict budget. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
Your positive outlook and helpful nature will turn even the most ill-tempered person into someone who is willing to compromise. Partnerships can take a turn for the better, but only if you are willing to stroke your partner's ego. ★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Work-related matters should be at the forefront of your mind today. Do all you can to get the projects you care the most about off the ground. Don't let others get wind of your ideas. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Little self-improvements will help to raise your self-esteem as well as bring you some much-needed attention. Social events appear to be romantically promising. ★★★★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
Don't stand for criticism that isn't valid. You must not let someone else's jealousy put a damper on your day or your progress. Don't waste your time reacting to negative action. ★★

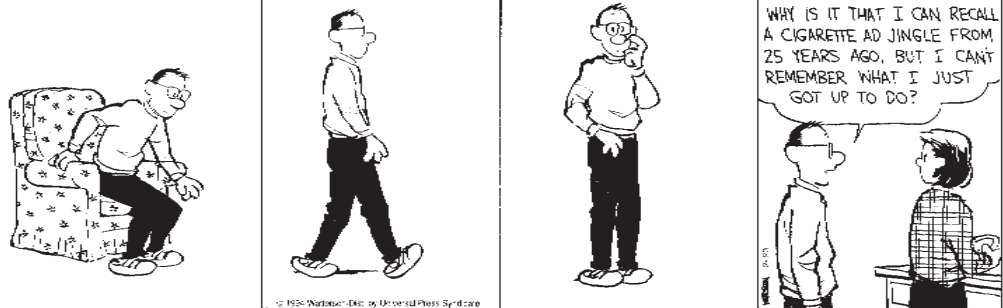
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
You can make the plans and arrangements and be the hero if you put a little effort into the events that you feel friends and family will enjoy. Pleasure travel will result in making some new friends. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

BIRTHDAY BABY: You are fidgety and always looking for something to occupy your time. You are interested in anything that is challenging and exciting. It's difficult for you to relax and do nothing.

(Need advice? Check out Eugenia on the Web at www.astroadvice.com or www.eugenialast.com.)

Calvin and Hobbes



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Adam@home



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By Brian Basset

Garfield®

by Jim Davis



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The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



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Team Standings		
Group A		
SIP-Verizon	4	0
Bayani	2	2
SMF	2	2
CCA	2	2
MDX	0	4
Group B		
Visminda	4	1
Cabalen	4	1
Mobi-LIPS	4	1
Bicol	1	3
MIFICPA	1	3
Samahang Laguna	0	5



Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	T
Yankees	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	1	7
Academy	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	2	1	8

SPORTS BRIEFS

Kwame Brown leads Wizards past Pacers



WASHINGTON (AP)—Kwame Brown had a career-high 25 points and nine rebounds Saturday as the Washington Wizards shot 63 percent in the first half and held on to beat the Indiana Pacers 107-96.

"It's coming together," said Brown, the top pick straight out of high school in the 2001 draft. "I'm a lot more comfortable. Not as jittery, taking my shots when I have it."

Brown made eight of 12 shots, nine of 10 free throws and had the better in a matchup against fellow straight-out-of-high-schoolers Jermaine O'Neal and Al Harrington. Brown, who has struggled for consistency over much of his career, is averaging 13 points and 7.8 rebounds over his last 11 games.

"Let's see some consistency," Washington coach Eddie Jordan said. "We're not going to gloat. We love what happened tonight. We're not going to say he's arrived, because it's all about consistency."

Steve Blake added a career-high 18 points for the Wizards, who never trailed and have won three of four.

Harrington scored 21 points for the Pacers, who were done in by poor outside shooting as they lost their second game in as many nights following a five-game winning streak. Indiana was 1-for-14 from 3-point range at one point in the fourth quarter and finished 5-for-22.

Warriors 105, Trail Blazers 87

In Portland, Oregon, Jason Richardson scored 31 points, including seven 3-pointers as Golden State beat Portland to end a 12-game road losing streak.

Erick Dampier added 20 rebounds and 18 points, and Speedy Claxton had 15 points, seven assists and five steals.

Zach Randolph had 23 points and seven rebounds for the Trail Blazers, while Rasheed Wallace added 13 points and nine rebounds.



Darius Miles played for the first time since being traded to the Trail Blazers by Cleveland for guard Jeff McInnis and center Ruben Boumtje Boumtje. Miles scored 12 points in 20 minutes.

Heat 85, Knicks 77

In New York, Eddie Jones scored 26 points and added six assists as Miami handed New York its first loss at Madison Square Garden under coach Lenny Wilkens.

Lamar Odom had 19 points, nine rebounds and five assists, and Caron Butler scored 17 for the Heat as they avenged two lopsided losses to the Knicks earlier this season.

Michael Doleac scored 18 and Penny Hardaway 16 for the Knicks, whose reserves outscored their starters 39-38. Doleac and Hardaway each played 32 minutes while Keith Van Horn played 26 and Houston 23.

Cavaliers 95, 76ers 87

In Cleveland, Eric Williams scored 20 points, Dajuan Wagner added 17 and Cleveland finally slowed down Philadelphia star Allen Iverson in the fourth quarter.

Carlos Boozer had 15 points and 15 rebounds as the Cavs improved to 2-1 without rookie star LeBron James, who missed his third straight game with a sprained right ankle.

Iverson scored 32 points—21 in the third.

Glenn Robinson had 20 points for the injury-riddled Sixers, who have lost six of eight.

Hornets 98, Spurs 96

In San Antonio, Darrell Armstrong capped a season-high 35-point performance by hitting a 3-pointer from 9-meters (25 feet) with a second left to lead New Orleans to a come-from-behind victory over San Antonio.

Washington Wizards' Etan Thomas (36) scores on Indiana Pacers' Jermaine O'Neal, behind, during the first quarter Saturday, Jan. 24, 2004, in Washington.

Armstrong finished 11-for-21 from the field and was a perfect 9-for-9 from the free throw line. He also nailed an 18-meter (53-foot) basket with a second left in the first half to close the Spurs' lead to 52-41.

The Spurs took an 18-point lead with five minutes left in the third, going up 69-51 after Tim Duncan dunked off an alley-oop pass from Manu Ginobili before New Orleans came back behind Armstrong.

Malik Rose led the Spurs with 20 points.

Lakers 93, Jazz 86

In Salt Lake City, Kobe Bryant returned from the injured list and scored 21 points to help the Los Angeles Lakers beat Utah to snap a nine-game road losing streak.

Bryant missed six games because of a sprained right shoulder. He felt good during the team shootaround earlier in the day and was activated.

Slava Medvedenko of the Ukraine tied his career high with 26 points for the Lakers, who let a 19-point lead slip to three twice before sealing their first road win since a 114-103 victory over Dallas on Dec. 4.

DeShawn Stevenson led Utah with 17 points.

SuperSonics 102, Clippers 97

In Seattle, Ray Allen scored 17 of his 41 points in the fourth quarter as Seattle took advantage of the Los Angeles Clippers' 4-for-19 3-point shooting.

The Sonics beat the Clippers for the third straight time this season, following two season-opening wins over Los Angeles in Japan in October.

Allen shot 14-for-23, including 6-for-10 from 3-point range, in finishing one point shy of his season best. Rashard Lewis, who had a career-high 50 points against the Clippers in the second game in Japan, added 15 points and Antonio Daniels came off the bench to score 14 for the Sonics.

Mickelson, Triplett share Bob Hope lead

By **KEN PETERS**
AP SPORTS WRITER



LAQUINTA, Calif. (AP)—Kirk Triplett shot a 9-under 63 Saturday, remaining bogey-free in the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic and tying Phil Mickelson for the lead at 26 under.

Triplett has 24 birdies, an eagle and 47 pars through 72 holes in the 90-hole tournament. Mickelson, making his 2004 debut, shot a 67 at Bermuda Dunes but still saw his two-shot lead evaporate. He won the Hope in 2002.

Kenny Perry, the 1995 champion, had consecutive eagles in his second 64 of the tournament and was one shot behind the co-leaders at 25-under 263.

Triplett who won the Reno-Tahoe Open last year for his second tour victory, holed a bunker shot for an eagle on No. 5 at Indian Wells Country Club, and made a twisting 20-foot birdie putt on No. 11 to highlight his fourth round.

John Daly had a rare double eagle on No. 2 at PGA West. Daly holed his second shot from 220 yards on the 514-yard par 5. He finished the round with a

72 and was 15 under.

Jay Haas, the 1988 champion and runner-up to Mike Weir a year ago, was two shots off the pace after a 67.

Perry gained four strokes to par with his consecutive eagles on the par-5 fifth and sixth holes at La Quinta Country Club.

He hit a 4-iron that stopped 12 feet past the hole on the 516-yard No. 5 and drilled the putt.

He hit another fine approach, a 3-iron from 229 yards on the 527-yard sixth hole. He curved the ball to the right and around a bunker, and the ball rolled within 8 feet. He sank that putt to pick up four shots in two holes and go to 24 under at that point.

Perry acknowledged the applause from the gallery with a wave, and shook his head, grinning.

Five others, including 2000 winner Jesper Parnevik at 266, were within four shots of the leaders.

Mickelson, making his 2004 debut and looking for his first win in 18 months, was somewhat inconsistent during his fourth round - ranging from a 40-foot birdie putt that he snaked into the hole

to a drive into the water and a bogey on No. 10.

By comparison to Triplett's zero bogeys, Mickelson had four bogeys through the first 72 holes.

The first four rounds of the Hope are played as a pro-am on four courses, with the players alternating daily. The field was cut to the low-scoring 70 pros and ties for the final round at PGA West.

It took a 72-hole score of 277 - 11 under - or better to make the cut.

Scores traditionally are very low, with the desert courses relatively easy, and most of the par 5s reachable in two shots. Weir won at 30-under 330 last year, Mickelson also was 30 under a year earlier when he won a playoff with David Berganio Jr., and Joe Durant set a tour record for a 90-hole tournament with a 36-under 324 in 2001.

Phil Mickelson watches his drive from the 13th tee box Saturday, Jan. 24, 2004 at the Bermuda Dunes Country Club in Palm Desert, Calif., during the fourth round of the Bob Hope Chrysler tournament.

AP



SPORTS BRIEFS

Table tennis singles tourney tomorrow

The Marianas Amateur Table Tennis Association is inviting the public to join the 2004 MATTA Open Singles Table Tennis Tournament.

The tournament will begin tomorrow and will continue throughout the rest of the month. It will be held Tuesday and Thursday nights at the multi-purpose room of the Gilbert C. Ada Ada Gymnasium.

The tournament format will be round-robin type of competition for the initial round where each participant will play all the other members of their division once.

Those who win the most games will move on to the elimination phase and playoffs.

Admission fee for the tournament will be \$10 per participant. Trophies will be presented to the winners of their respective divisions during an after-tournament dinner.

Children who wish to participate should inform their parents and ask for their consent. For more information please call Steve Lim at 483-7842.

21st Island Relay set for Dec. 28

Officials of the 21st Annual Christmas Island Relay announced that this year's 13.7-mile team event is set to take place during the early morning hours of December 28.

The starting point of the course will be at the Pacific Islands Club south parking lot. Participants will then head north and work their way to the finish line at the Last Command Post in Marpi.

Interested teams may register at the starting point of the race, which will be at the Pacific Islands Club south parking lot in San Antonio. Registration begins at 5:15am.

Each team, which consists of five members, must switch runners every mile. It is also required that each team has at least one female participant or a participant who is under the age of 16 or in the senior division. Prior to competing, all teams must pay a fee of \$25.

For more information about the 21st Annual Christmas Island Relay, please contact Elias Rangamar at 234-1001 or 1002.

Budweiser Cup on Jan. 12

Officials of the much-awaited Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands Budweiser Cup have decided to push back the kick off date of the 2003 island-wide men's basketball season to January 12 of next year.

So far, 10 teams have shown interest in participating in the league. Only eight, however, are confirmed to battle for the championship crown and the \$1,000 grand prize that goes along with it. Also at stake are the \$300 prize for the runner-up and the \$200 award for the second runner-up.

Each team interested in taking part in the season is required to pay an entrance fee of \$900 that must be payable to BANMI.

Aside from the prizes awarded to the top three finishers, other prizes may be claimed through a half-court shot competition and a three-point contest.

For more information, please contact Rangamar at 664-2500 or Abner Venus at 234-5911.

SPG Council launches logo contest

The South Pacific Games Council Executive Board has announced that it will be selecting a new logo for the SPG Council. The winning logo will be selected from designs submitted through the national sports federations represented on the Council.

The contest is open to everyone. The general public is invited to submit design proposals. The Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association will select one or more of the designs submitted to it, for transmission to the SPG Council.

All entries should be submitted to NMASA President Mi-

dilla 6, Lopez 6, Miday 5, Mumar 2.

Second Game

Cabalen-RP Construction 121 – Mendoza 25, Delos Reyes 35, Ocampo 13, Alipio 12, Arnedo 12, Jo. Gatdula 6, Magcalas 5, Sinca 3, Barbo 2.

SIP-Verizon 103 – R. Alegre 19, Mendoza 18, Guiab 14, Factor 13, Rapanut 13, Villacrusis 9, T. Alegre 7, Tamondong 5, Flores 3, Garcia 2.

Scoring by quarters: 24-27, 59-50, 90-79, 121-103.

Sequioco tops Tuesday pool

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER



Boyot Sequioco put together another perfect run last Tuesday to win the Round Two 8-Ball Fun Tournament that evening at the pioneering sports bar.

The Olangapo, Zambales native triumphed three straight times after getting a bye in the opening round then turned back a courageous effort by Ike Celis to win the Tuesday 8-ball plum.

Sequioco first victimized Cherish Reyes in the second round before getting the better of Celis in the next round. He then slammed perennial pool winner Manny Mariano in the winners' bracket final to secure the first finals berth and the all-important twice-to-beat advantage.

Celis, for his part, had to work double time after being relegated to losers' bracket play by the crafty Sequioco.

The silver-haired Celis rebounded quickly and nicely by first beating Round Two owner Don Pangelinan. He then eliminated top lady player Rosemarie Moses-Arnold before moving on to the losers' bracket final opposite Mariano.

The outing against Mariano was where Celis truly shone, as the veteran pool player shocked the Filipino cue artist and arranged a championship round



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left: Third place Manny Mariano, Round Two 8-Ball Fun Tournament champion Boyot Sequioco, and runner-up Ike Celis.

meeting with third round conqueror Sequioco.

Unfortunately for Celis his sparkling run apparently ran out in the deciding match against Sequioco, allowing the Hafa Adai security guard to come away with the weekly pool title. He won a handsome trophy and the \$40 top prize for his efforts.

Celis settled for the \$25 runner-up purse, while Mariano took home the \$15 third place

prize. All three men also got souvenir caps from Pacific Trading Co.

Other billiard players that graced the Tuesday 8-ball competition were Gary Ridley, Lars and Palacios.

The Round Two 8-Ball Tournament is held every Tuesday starting at 8pm and has an entry fee of \$10.

Round Two also regularly hosts two other pool tournaments through the course of the week.

Its winner-take-all pool tournament is held every Sunday starting at 1pm and costs \$5 to join.

On Thursdays, Round Two holds the exciting Miller Lite Invitational 8-Ball Tournament starting at 8pm. Entry fee is \$15 on regular days but goes up to \$25 every last Thursday of the month.

For more information on Round Two's tournaments, please contact Don Pangelinan at 234-6930.

ROCBALL

From Page 28

gram WATTS, wrote that that the program, which features shows on different sports from around the world, would like to attain footage, pictures, and information of Rocball for airing.

Feger also confirmed that he will send a couple of videotapes, information about the history of the sport, rules, and several articles and news clippings to Chimienti.

Eurosport reaches over 95 million homes in 54 countries.

Also being attracted to the sport is Brian Meredith, an operation manager for CrackerJax, a sports-theme amusement park in Scotts-

LOVE

From Page 28

one of only two birdies in the round.

Love holed putts of 20 feet and 15 feet for birdies on the next two holes, then easily reached the par-5 11th with a 5-iron to set up his fourth straight birdie.

"I had my pompoms out, cheering him on," Woods said. "I told him on the 10th tee I was two ahead. He said, 'How's that?' I told him I was getting a stroke a hole."

Love smiled when asked about Woods' comments.

"I didn't want to stick my hand in the cage and ask him if

he wanted strokes," Love said.

Meredith stated in his letter to Feger that he is currently searching for ways to make their three volleyball courts useful, and was intrigued after coming across some information about Rocball while browsing through the Internet.

Meredith added that he is trying to modify the courts to Rocball standards and is working towards starting a Rocball league.

"I can't believe that nobody in America plays this sport," Meredith stated.

Last year, Feger scheduled a special match featuring 2001 and 2002 champions DX and Jammers, which was taped and sent

to the Fox Sports Show "You Gotta See This." Fox Sports Show's Associate Producer Eric Hopkins expressed his interest in the sport. Camera crews were set up at courtside and on the roof of the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

He also sent a couple of videotapes, written information, and graphics to the Rocball Federation of India.

In related news, the World Organized Rocball Inter-scholastic and Community League's 2004 season is set to get underway on January 12.

Teams will engage in several practice rounds prior to seeing battle in the preliminary rounds, which is expected to kick off just

a couple of weeks later.

All interested players are encouraged to begin organizing squads for the league, which unlike other sporting events, doesn't require an entrance fee.

All matches will be played at the Marianas High School Green Court. Should Mother Nature interrupt with wet showers, matches will be played at the school's gym.

Feger began organizing and writing about the sport while in Japan in 1979. After two years of experimenting, the sport finally progressed into a tournament in 1983.

For more information, please contact Feger at 664-3810 or 288-8722.

IT'S CABALEN

From Page 28

points and Guiab 14 before fouling out.

In the first game, the UFO All-Stars finally notched a win after beating Bicol Express-RNV Construction 53-44.

First Game

UFO All-Stars 53 – Mendiola 20, Malasarte 13, Pardinan 10, Gatdula 6, Canedo 4.

Bicol-RNV Construction 44 – Jugos 15, Aldan 10, Aba-

Mike Weir, who opened with a 75, had a 3-under 69 and was at 212.

Choi is making his first appearance in the final event of the year, and would like nothing better to end his season with a victory - even though it doesn't count in the record books and won't get him back to Kapalua.

"It would be even better ... because of the field," Choi said.

Catching up to Love could require a great round, especially the way Love is playing. The calm, warmer conditions allowed the ball to travel farther and the power hitters to play more aggressively.

be meaningful coming against a 16-man field of high-ranked players and three of the four major champions.

Plus, Love has played the last two rounds with Woods, a situation that in the past hasn't allowed him to play his best.

Love has worked all year to worry about only his own game. In fact, he was having dinner with friends Friday night when they told him to beat Woods.

"K.J. is the guy to beat right now," Love said. "People don't see it the way we do. You've got to beat the golf course."

Harrington missed a 3-foot par putt on the final hole for a 70 and was in third place at 211, six shots behind. Masters champion



Trail Blazers defeat the Lakers, 112-108

Damon Stoudamire hit two 3-pointers in the final minutes and the Portland Trail Blazers handed the Los Angeles Lakers their second loss in two nights with a 112-108 victory Saturday night.

25

Saipan Tribune Sports

Sequioco tops Tuesday pool

Boyet Sequioco put together another perfect run last Tuesday to win the Round Two 8-Ball Fun Tournament that evening at the pioneering sports bar.



27

28 MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2003

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

It's Cabalen against Visminda

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

Cabalen-RP Construction reaffirmed their mastery over SIP-Verizon dethroning the three-time defending champion with a 121-103 rout Sunday night that secured them a finals ticket opposite Visminda-Country House in the 2003 UFO Miller Lite Cup championship.

The Transamerica-backed squad atoned for a shaky start, which had them trail SIP-Verizon 27-24 after the opening quarter, with a terrific second quarter.

Big man Ronald Delos Reyes, the goat in Cabalen's 103-108 loss to Visminda last week, came back strong and hit a couple of triples in the second stanza to start the fireworks for Cabalen.

Youthful center Ryan Mendoza, meanwhile, complemented Delos Reyes' sharp-shooting ways by scoring 12 points from point blank range also in the second quarter.

The combination of efficient outside shooting and strong inside play translated to a 59-50 halftime advantage for Cabalen.

SIP-Verizon, whose players

RP Construction dethrones SIP, 121-103

came in late due to a mix-up in scheduling, continued to take on water and struggled mightily in the second half.

Cabalen's aggressive game had their opponents on the defensive during the early part of the third period. Another 3-pointer by Delos Reyes at the 8:03 mark of the quarter gave Cabalen its biggest lead so far at 68-54.

A few plays later, Mendoza struck again on the inside to pad their edge further at 72-54 with 6:47 remaining in the period.

Following a put-back by Delos Reyes on a miss free throw off a 3-point opportunity by Mendoza, the score stood at 89-68 with less than two minutes left in the third.

But SIP-Verizon was far from gone and retaliated with an 11-3 burst to close the quarter that cut their deficit to 90-79.

Cabalen's Mendoza also chipped in to SIP-Verizon's cause, inadvertently making a layup on SIP-Verizon's basket after an inbound play following a timeout with 31 ticks to go.

The big end-game rally, however, didn't materialize

for SIP-Verizon as Cabalen thwarted all attempts at an uprising and maintained their healthy lead all throughout the final quarter.

There were still a lot of scary moments though. With Cabalen up 96-84, SIP-Verizon forward Gary Rapanut missed a routine layup that could've cut the lead to 10 points.

At the 5:31 mark of the game Edsel Mendoza missed two tries from the free throw line and in the succeeding SIP-Verizon offensive, newly arrived Leo Factor missed the bonus free throw on a 3-point play that could've slashed Cabalen's lead again to 10 points.

With SIP-Verizon still within striking distance swingman Junar Guiab was hit with his fifth personal foul with 4:05 to go. Shortly after Factor followed him to the showers.

Playing-coach Rick Alegre's coast-to-coast layup made it 108-97 with 2:52 left in the game but that appeared to be SIP-Verizon's last gasp as Cabalen went on a 9-2 tear

highlighted by an off-balanced 3-point play by Randy Arnedo that, for all intents and purpose, sealed the game at 117-99 with 1:33 remaining.

Mendoza earned Miller Lite MVP of the Game

honors after scoring 35 points, which was the same output submitted by Delos Reyes. Veterans Alex Ocampo, Jun Alipio added 13 and 12 points, respectively.

Rick Alegre topscored for SIP-Verizon with 19 points. Edsel Mendoza chipped in 16

See IT'S CABALEN on Page 27



By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

Saipan's very own sport, Roc-ball, is steadily gaining more interest from the outside world.

This was learned late last week after founder and organizer James Feger announced that he has received e-mails from a couple organizations, Eurosport TV and a sports amusement park in Arizona, interested in gaining more information about the sport.

Eurosport, the most widely available sports channel in Europe, has made contact with Feger and has shown interest in learning more about the sport for future broadcasting.

In an e-mail letter to Feger, Pablo Chimienti of Eurosport's weekly pro-

See ROCBALL on Page 27



Love pulls away from Tiger at Sherwood

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP GOLF WRITER



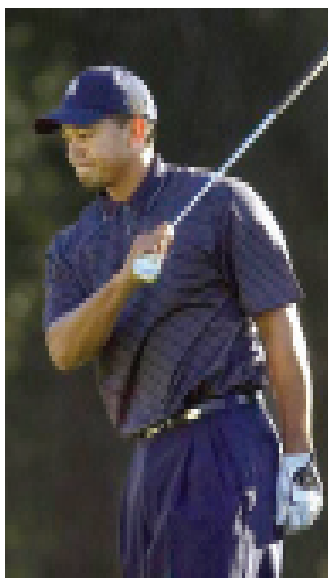
THOUSAND OAKS, Calif.

(AP) — Davis Love III made four straight birdies to leave Tiger Woods in the dust and pull away from a world-class field Saturday, finishing with a 9-under 63 to build a three-shot lead in the Target World Challenge.

Despite a bogey on the par-3 17th, Love tied the tournament record set last year by Pádraig Harrington in the third round. Harrington built a record six-shot lead and hung on to win against Woods.

Love, at 11-under 205, only had a three-shot margin over K.J. Choi (65), although he won't have to worry about Woods.

As most of the leaders were posting birdies on a sunny, benign afternoon at Sherwood, the tournament host gave up



AP

Tiger Woods reacts to his approach shot on the 18th hole during the third round of the Target World Challenge, Saturday, Dec. 13, 2003, in Thousand Oaks, Calif.

ground with a three-putt bogey on No. 3 and then hit his tee shot into the water for a bogey on the next hole.

Woods lost all hope on the

final hole, hitting off the pine straw and coming up well short, into the water, and he had to make a 15-footer for bogey. He had a 72 and was nine shots back at 214.

Meanwhile, Love played some of his best golf since early in the year.

"I was confident all day," Love said. "I'm getting more and more comfortable playing with Tiger and around the lead."

Love was tied with Choi and Justin Leonard when his 4-iron on the difficult par-3 8th climbed just enough to hop into the fringe and stop about 6 feet above the hole for

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Cabalen-RP Construction's Ryan Mendoza attempts an undergoal stab against SIP-Verizon's Leo Factor during the third quarter of their do-or-die 2003 UFO Miller Lite match Sunday night.

